

012635688

A N N A,

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A WELCH HEIRESS.



A N N A,

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A WELCH HEIRESS.

BY MRS. BENNETT,

AUTHOR OF

ELLEN COUNTESS OF CASTLE HOWELL,
&c. &c.

FOURTH EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Minerva-press.

LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XCVI.

A N N A

MEMOIR OF A WITCH



IN FOUR VOLUMES

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE

A N N A.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Grateful Pride.

WHEN Anna was first introduced at Dennis Place, Lady Edwin received her as a pretty country girl, who, merely from a dearth of more eligible companions, had been favoured with the notice of Mrs. Herbert; and her daughter Miss Edwin not being used to exaggerate the charms or merit of her female acquaintance, had mentioned her in that light to her mamma; adding, she was very good natured, and so great a favourite with Patty, it would be cruel to separate them.

A hint was always sufficient to induce Lady Edwin to adopt any mode consistent with her own ideas of propriety, that would contribute to the happiness of another, particularly when that other was the niece and great favourite of her husband; she therefore consented to the invitation—and however obscure Anna was in other respects, when she became a guest at Dennis Place, the owners considered her as entitled to every kind of respect and politeness. But Lady Cecilia not being interested about her either by curiosity, benevolence or pride, some days had elapsed before she was familiar even with the features of her face.

That intelligent index to a perfect soul was not formed long to be overlooked, the sweetness and delicacy of her animated countenance at length called forth the admiration of Lady Cecilia, and rendered the thousand graces of her person and conversation the more pleasing from their having been so long unobserved. Her beau-



beautiful figure now struck her Ladyship as embellished with uncommon mental perfections; she was astonished to find, tho' young and wholly ignorant of the world, her education and accomplishments, added to a fine understanding and elegant manners, were equal to any thing she had ever met in the first circles; they were indeed such as claimed, and were honoured with every flattering mark of distinction, and in a short time she became the favourite companion of Lady Edwin.

Anna, ever obliging and grateful, studied the wishes of a lady who had not won less on her respect than affection, and perceiving as the stiff Trevanion hauteur wore off, the many great and good qualities that adorned the elevated rank of Lady Edwin, delighted in her society. She was laughed at by Miss Edwin for her stupid taste: but that young lady had a great deal more of her love than esteem, venturing to think herself right, when perhaps Miss Edwin conceived her wrong, she was not to be laughed

out of a conduct that produced pleasure and improvement.

In one of the frequent airings, when Anna was honoured with a seat in Lady Edwin's cabriole, her noble conductress pointed out to her the beauty of the shrubs and flowers that grew in profusion on the wild mountain tops; adding, she would give the world to have the coat and train of a birth-day suit worked from them.

Embroidering was the forte of our heroine: Mrs. Mansel was one of the finest work-women in England, and being fond of the occupation had rendered her pupil equal to herself. Eager to cultivate the farther good will of Lady Cecilia, Anna instantly offered to finish one, by the Queen's birth-day, when Miss Edwin was to be presented.

Lady Edwin smiled at her eagerness to undertake a task which she did not believe could be accomplished, till she beheld the pencil of her young companion tracing

tracing from life, in a very masterly manner, the shrubs she admired.

A piece of rich white fatin was directly written for, and from a temple, on the top of an adjacent hill, which served as a point of view from Dennis Place, the pattern was drawn and coloured with such taste, that the fair artist began to be spoken of as a prodigy at Dennis Place, while she was toasted by all the male visitors round the country, as the loveliest creature in it.

A month, the period allowed for this visit, had passed rapidly; another was pressingly requested, but the same letter that brought consent, gave Anna the sincerest grief, Mrs. Mansel had been seized with a sudden giddiness in her head, which occasioned her falling down a stone flight of steps, and her indisposition increasing with the lameness got by the fall, she had left Llandore Castle.

Dennis Place, its grandeur, its elegance, its beauty; the flattering distinction of Lady Edwin, the good humoured freedom of Sir William, nor the society of her

young friends, had now the least attraction for Anna; it was in vain they attempted to detain her! Mrs. Mansel, her dear maternal friend! her more than mother! was ill, and Lady Edwin was prevailed upon with great reluctance to send her home, although her esteem was increased by the motive by which she was actuated.

Anna found Mrs. Mansel much worse than from Mrs. Herbert's representation she expected, and the good, the worthy rector, almost broken hearted; but her presence diffused joy in the bosoms of both her friends; Mrs. Mansel wept at so lively an instance of her affection, and said she should now want no other doctor; and her husband, whose happiness all centered in his wife, was in transports at the happy effect the sight of Anna produced. Slow and uncertain was that good woman's recovery; her leg, swelled and inflamed, confined her at home; and her other complaints seldom permitted an intercourse with her friendly neighbours.

This

This little absence, tho' it had opened a new world to Anna, by introducing her to scenes of splendour as superior to any thing she had seen at Melmoth Lodge, as Melmoth Lodge was to the Parsonage, had the effect only of endearing to her those friends it had parted her from, and that peace she had lost.

She was now arrived at an age, when the advantage of Mr. Melmoth's goodness to her became conspicuous in the sense and judgment, far beyond her years, which was exhibited in all her actions; the lessons she had received from him were those of purity and honour; she was early taught to hold vice, whatever shape it might assume, in the most perfect abhorrence. Those precepts were industriously inculcated by her governess, and enforced by the natural goodness of her own heart. An entire stranger to deceit, she did not suspect in others, what she had no idea of practising; she had a great share of pride, which often rendered the sense of her dependant situation on the charity

of strangers, insupportable, and that pride first pointed out the necessity of employing those talents to advantage which God had blessed her with; she knew the magnificence of Lady Edwin's spirit, and flattered herself, if the work pleased, which she had brought home, it would prevent her being entirely a burthen on the generosity of her friends, whose income, *now* in an expensive illness, she feared must be little enough for themselves; gladly then she began a task on which so much depended, and as she chiefly sat by the bed or easy chair of her dear governess, she had the constant benefit of advice and instruction in arranging the foil, and shading the flowers.

As soon as one breadth was finished, it was sent to Dennis Place; Lady Edwin was in raptures, and returned it with a purse of twenty pounds, which she begged Anna would accept to purchase for herself, if that was possible, what would be as pleasing to her as her work was to Lady Edwin.

With

With equal joy and pride did Anna carry this purse to her invaluable friends; it would enable her, she told them, to look at them without confusion, if she might but hope she should ever be able to shew them the gratitude of her heart independent of her obligations; will, said the grateful girl, (throwing herself on her knees at their feet, the purse in her offering hands) will it be ever my happy lot to administer to your comforts? wants, I trust, you will have none, but, is it not possible your Anna may yet live to bless her dear governess?

If the reader has ever feasted on the sensibility of generous minds, he will, perhaps have some idea of the returns made by our Welsh parson and his wife, to the grateful overflowings of an uncorrupted heart; if he has not, description will do nothing for him; Mrs. Mansel slept not till she had sent for linen, a new riding habit, and other articles of rural finery, for our heroine (*all this any body may understand*) to the full amount of the twenty pounds.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Love in a Village.

BUT, anxious as Anna was to complete her task, and lame as Mrs. Mansel still continued, they were not entirely excluded from society; Mrs. Herbert visited them constantly, and sometimes ordered her cook to the parsonage with game, or any other little delicacy she hoped the invalid might like, and dined with them to tempt her to eat. In one of those visitations, as she called them, a young man accompanied her, who had often met with Mr. and Mrs. Mansel at Llandore, but having been in England some time on business, never happened to have seen Anna.

Mr. Wilkinson had been employed in the Iron works, I have before mentioned,

as

as partly the property of Mr. Herbert, who engaged him from London for the purpose of over-looking and directing the Works; and he had so recommended himself to the company by his knowledge, ingenuity, and industry, that he was admitted a partner, and allowed his share of the profits, instead of a salary, on condition of his living on the spot, and taking on him the attentive part of the business.

Mrs. Herbert was very partial to Wilkinson; she was still more so to Anna; his prospects were great, her's were indifferent; but the amiable qualities of her mind, and the charms of her person were she thought, equivalent, and she had already made in her own ideas a match between this deserving pair. Without telling him any thing of her intention, he was invited to go to the parsonage to see a curious piece of work, but the lovely artist was not named. What she foresaw, came to pass, as far as related to Wilkinson: he fell desperately in love: but if he was charmed with Anna's person, what became

of him when, drawn out by Mrs. Herbert, he heard her deliver, with equal wisdom and propriety, the sentiments of reason and rectitude, graced with the most enchanting vivacity, and when she was called upon to play and sing? Mrs. Herbert was one of the most valuable of women; she was not only extremely amiable in her manners, but of a sincere and friendly disposition; it was not therefore possible to refuse her request; and the wish to entertain in a manner most pleasing to herself, so kind a visitor, rendered Anna's performance worthy the friends whose partial commendations were always the height of her ambition.

Mr. Wilkinson, whose education had been far inferior to the strong natural parts he was blessed with, felt his passion for Anna, which increased every moment, with a fear, that so lovely, so accomplished a creature was not destined for him, while the object of his admiration sat wholly unconscious of Mrs. Herbert's design, or the power of her own charms, neither
suspecting

suspecting the one, or interested in the effect of the other.

When Mrs. Herbert and Mr. Wilkinson left the village, that lady soon induced him, who was really enamoured, to declare the state of his mind; and in return informed him of all she knew concerning Anna; videlicet, that she was an orphan relation of the Mansels; that her person and accomplishments were the whole of her fortune; and that it would be, she supposed, a desirable thing with her friends, to marry her to an honest man of good views; adding, she thought *he* was that man, and as far as she, who was partial to both, could judge, there was a very fair prospect of happiness in their union.

The result of this conversation was Wilkinson's frequent visits to the parsonage, and soon after a declaration of his sentiments to the rector, who declined, according to a very foolish custom of his, returning any answer till he had consulted his wife; and Mrs. Mansel, on her part, chose to make Anna acquainted with

with her conquest, and to hear her sentiments before she communicated her own.

The surprise and confusion of our heroine at this address was purely the effect of innate modesty; untinged by the least atom of inclination for Wilkinson, or any other person, she had not considered herself as the object of his attention, nor had observed him with one jot more curiosity than she would have done his grandfather; and so far from a partiality towards him, or indeed, any of the sex, the idea of being particularly noticed, gave her disgust rather than pleasure; and she told her friends coolly, she was too happy in their protection to wish it changed.

A negative so truly feminine, to a proposal of such advantage, pleased Mr. Mansel; he congratulated her on her conquest, of a man whose character, as well as circumstances, were without doubt unobjectionable; and said he hoped he should have the happiness of giving his dear child

to

to a worthy young man who would be sensible of so great a blessing.

This kind of language astonished Anna; she had no idea, so simple and so frank were her principles, that what she really meant as a positive rejection, could be mistaken, apparently alarmed and hurt at Mr. Mansel's misconstruction, she begged not to be urged on the subject; for she was sure it was impossible she could ever feel the sentiments for Mr. Wilkinson, she knew Mrs. Mansel felt for *him*, and bursting into tears, expressed her fears, that this lady and her husband were weary of her,—tenderly embracing her, they bid her not afflict herself; if, said Mrs. Mansel, he were an emperor, I would not urge my Anna to any act, not sanctified with her own full choice.

Her youth and inexperience were, to those worthy people, sufficient reasons for the averfeness of Anna to the proposal of the young man; but as they were sure her affections were not engaged, they made him happy, by the hope, that time might

crown

crown his wishes with success; as they knew her heart free from any other impressions, they advised him to pay court to her esteem, sometime before he pressed for her hand, and gave him a general invitation to the house for that purpose; he was treated with every mark of respect and friendship by the rector and his lady, whose health becoming every day more precarious, rendered this little addition to their society agreeable and entertaining, particularly as Miss Herbert returned no more that summer to Llandore, but was joined by her mother at Dennis Place.

As the long evenings approached, Mr. Wilkinfon took his abode at Llandore Castle, the Works where he had a house, being at too great a distance to go to, after spending his evenings, as he constantly did, at the parsonage.

He read to Anna whilst she sat at her frame, played a social pool with Mr. and Mrs. Mansel at home, and when they mixed, which could be but seldom, in the diversions,

diversions, that the guileless inhabitants of the place contrived not to kill, but for the enjoyment of time, he was always of the party; if they danced he was her partner; if she rode out, he was her escort; and when she walked, her companion; but those interviews and constant opportunities, whilst it riveted her conquest over Wilkinson, did nothing for him; on the contrary, the more they were together, the less she found herself inclined to favour his suit.

Mr. Wilkinson was certainly a handsome, agreeable man, had something peculiarly sweet in his voice and address, very genteel in his person, far above mediocrity in understanding, and at that time about eight or nine and twenty, he was therefore very unexceptionable in personal and mental accomplishments, and his circumstances now very good, were, by his great industry and care, every day enlarging; but to a heart like Anna's whose knowledge of mankind was merely theoretic, and something more was wanting

ing; her own sentiments were the pure effusions of innocence and virtue; Wilkinson's might be no less, so but he had not that tender, delicate manner of expressing them, that appeared necessary to her happiness, and when, after a thousand fruitless attempts to speak, (wherein a true lover, whose passion is unassured of success, always appears to disadvantage,) he disclosed in faltering accents the strong and respectful affection he bore her, he had the mortification of hearing from lips unaccustomed to deviate from truth, and unacquainted with those artifices deceit in one sex renders necessary in the other, a firm and cool refusal of his offers; his grief is not to be expressed.

With a full heart and dejected countenance he repaired to the study of Mr. Mansel, whose disappointment, the effect of his affection for Anna, at this steady perseverance in her first declaration, was almost as great as the lover's; Mrs. Mansel, however, declined, and requested the same forbearance from the
rector

rector, interfering in a matter on which the happiness of her dear young friend so materially depended, and it was in vain that the enamoured Wilkinson intreated her interest; all he could obtain was, to continue his present footing in the family, an advantage he made the most of, being seldom absent, and taking care to favour the report of his being actually engaged to Miss Mansel, which, from their being always seen together, was universally believed.

CHAPTER XXV.

A New Acquaintance.

ON the last day of the year Lady Edwin's satin was taken out of the frame, and sent to London; the encomiums bestowed, by the best judges, on the work of Anna, was not more flattering to her pride, than the present that accompanied them, was to the grateful feelings of her heart. Mrs. Mansel accepted the office of her Banker, and a new piece of work was directly set about for Miss Edwin.

Early in the spring, Mrs. Herbert's family returned to Wales; Anna, in her eighteenth year, and Miss Herbert in her twentieth, had now formed the establishment of a friendship no less lasting than sincere; the girlish amusements they had before

before adopted, were given up for more noble and useful pursuits.

The foundation of sense and taste, first laid by Mr. Melmoth, and carefully improved by Mrs. Mansel, was rapidly increasing to perfection in the mind of Anna; and those two ladies, both of the best dispositions, were of mutual benefit to each other.

Miss Herbert's education had been liberal, though not expensive; and Bath, where they spent so considerable a part of the year, gave her an acquaintance with the great world, of which our heroine was perfectly ignorant.

On the other hand, Anna, in her uninformed state, possessed a fund of book-knowledge; her sentiments were all the offspring of those impressions which her early advantages had engraved on her mind; with constant reading, she had happily blended great taste and judgment; she was blessed with a retentive memory; and the sort of things she chose to entertain her friend with in return for her lessons

sons on polite life, were of a nature to be very well received by a sensible young woman; in fine they were quite satisfied with each other, and so fond of being together, that Mrs. Herbert consented Patty should spend one week at the parsonage, on condition Mrs. Mansel would spare Anna the other at Llandore.

In this friendly intercourse, without a single anxious thought to interrupt the serenity of the passing hour, except Mrs. Mansel's health, which then wore a more flattering aspect than it had lately done, was spent May, June, and July.

At this period, a young stranger to Anna made his appearance at Llandore; Mr. Charles Herbert and our heroine were perfectly acquainted with each other's character, and were mutually prejudiced by the descriptions they had heard; but high as his expectations were raised, the young student could not conceal his surprise, when his sister introduced him to her friend; to him she indeed appeared,

More

More than painting can exprefs,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love.

It was happy for him that his mother had fore-armed him with the intelligence (ſhe believed true) of her being engaged to Wilkinſon, and that his notions of honour were of the old Cambrian ſtamp, which forbad his invading the ſacred right of another.

Mr. Herbert was at this time in his twenty-fourth year; he had a very fine figure, and poſſeſſed an open, honeſt, manly countenance: his eyes, when affected, ſpoke to the heart, his teeth fine, and addreſs pleaſing.

He was one of the braveſt, yet moſt compaſſionate of men; at the inſtant that a ſenſe of injury roused the lion in his ſoul, a tale of woe melted him to what is called womaniſh weakneſs.

His purſe was open to the calls of the needy; he was too generous to be rich, and too ſincere to be reckoned a ſaint.

Indeed ſome little irregularities in the female line rendered Mrs. Herbert uneaſy, leſt he ſhould inherit his father's indiſcretion,

tion ;but every doubt of his conduct vanished when she saw him.

He was the most dutiful and affectionate son in the world ; and his mother, in his opinion, the first woman in it.

He was passionate, the fault perhaps of his blood, but forgiving.

He was frank to a degree, some people would say of imprudence ; but it was the frankness of an honest heart, which having in it nothing to hide, cared not who saw into its inmost recesses.

To say the thing that was not, was, in his estimation, the most contemptible of all vices ; and to affect what he felt not, the most difficult of all tasks.

The profession he was designed for obliged him to apply much to study ; but nothing was farther from him than pedantry ; he was doted on by his parents ; Mr. Herbert was proud and fond of him, and Patty and him appeared to have but one heart between them.

Such as he was, the first interview convinced Anna there were men, and this
one

one of them, much nearer to her standard of perfection than Wilkinson, who was present, and did not, in her secret comparison, appear to the advantage he certainly wished.

What escapes the eye of love? the admiration of Herbert, as he examined the faultless countenance of Miss Mansel, the attention with which he regarded her every act, and the approbation visible in his tale-telling eyes when she spoke, conveyed a thousand fears into the bosom of poor Wilkinson; jealousy, for the first time, found a place in his imagination; if, when the object he adored saw only him, or received not the least attention from any man but himself, she preserved her coldness and declined his love, what had he now to fear, when an amiable and accomplished rival might be ready to seize every advantage her indifference to him could give.

One only means struck him to avert the dreadful blow; he knew the honour, the probity of young Herbert's principles, he was sure he could not be guilty of injuring him, if once he conceived Anna his

affianced right; their engagement, he knew, would be security against any attempts to supersede him in her affections; and this artifice, the first he had ever been guilty of, he put in practice the moment an opportunity offered; he gravely and roundly asserting his engagement, which being innocently corroborated by Mrs. Herbert, and believed by every body in the neighbourhood, admitted not a doubt with Charles Herbert of its truth; he congratulated Wilkinson on his happiness, telling him his choice was the most lovely creature he had ever seen; and added, with his native frankness, if she had been free, he must have been her slave.

The neighbouring gentry, as those in that country are called, who live within twenty miles, pouring in to visit young Herbert, occasioned a short cessation to the happy hours our two young friends used to dedicate to the most refined friendship; Anna, at her earnest request, was suffered to stay at home till the bustle was over; and Miss Herbert, when the company

pany consisted only of gentlemen, always joined her at breakfast; sometimes her brother, whose fraternal love would not suffer his sister to walk so far alone, accompanied her; but as Anna felt a something like embarrassment in his company, which preventing her inviting him to stay, he returned after the salutations of the morning. To the grief of Wilkinfon, however, they soon returned to their old mode; he, whenever he could break from his business, still attending on Anna.

Mr. Herbert was fond of music, he played on several instruments, sang with taste, and his voice was pleasing and melodious: Wilkinfon liked to hear Anna sing or play, but as to music, he could not distinguish a jig from Handel's best compositions, his society, which had been agreeable, became teasing and tiresome; his attention was rude, it robbed her of the conversation of a sensible man, whose pleasure, when he entertained her, shone in his fine eyes; it was certainly ill bred in Wilkinfon to take his offered place, when he happened (which

indeed was oftner the case) to be sitting next her; and she could not conceive the reason why, if they walked or rode out, he was at once eager to be near her, and yet resign his place the moment Wilkinson came!

But it pleased, she saw, Mr. and Mrs. Mansel; and Mrs. Herbert visibly favoured his address; therefore she said nothing to them; and to him she had no opportunity, as he never touched on his passion when alone, altho' he provokingly adopted in public the entire appearance of a favoured lover; this however, happened but twice a week; the intermediate space no jealous lover to interrupt the morning rambles, or evening conversation, she was the object to whom Mr. Herbert addressed both his speech and attention. Unconscious of any wish, but what was authorized by virtue and honour, and won the modest display of his own superior knowledge and learning, all reserve was off; she sang and played his favourite songs, walked with him, and listened, delighted when he read, as he undertook to

Mil

Milton, which was his favourite author, to his mother and the two young ladies.

Thus happily passed August and September; but a letter which then arrived, announcing the intention of Miss Edwin to honour them with a visit, interrupted those charming parties.

Two months before, Anna would have rejoiced to see Cecilia; now it would quite derange their amusements; besides, Miss Edwin was in love with Mr. Herbert, and Mr. Herbert was in love with Miss Edwin. Well, certainly love was no improver of conversation, as appeared in Mr. Wilkinson, whose presence interrupted it; and indeed she so little liked such society, she would stay at home; her work had been strangely neglected; Mr. Herbert could not possibly now go on with Milton; Miss Edwin would hardly attend to it; notwithstanding he went so delightfully through those beautiful passages.

Positively he should not have his happiness interrupted by her, while Miss Edwin was with him.

Forming this plan, as she was crossing the vale, out of a winding path which opened to the road, appeared Charles Herbert; whether conscious she was out of humour by anticipation, from surprise, or from any other cause, she blushed deep as scarlet, and then instantly turned as pale as death.

Mr. Herbert, I have told my reader, was a good natured man, and compassion itself; he flew to her, and inquired, with undissembled anxiety, the reason of her agitated looks; apologised for his sudden intrusion, for which he acknowledged himself the more culpable, as the little copse of wood, out of which he came, hanging on the side of the hill, had concealed him from her sight, though he saw her from the time she had crossed the river, and he had come from it with a foolish intent to surprise her; but the fright he had put her in had been his severe punishment; he should not exist till she pardoned him.

Anna had by this time, recollected herself, and apologised in her turn for alarming him; but do you forgive me, Miss Mansel, said he, offering his hands;
will

will you be friends? Still holding them open to invite hers, which, after some hesitation, she extended to him. The glow of sensibility, added to the natural bloom of his complexion; he dropped with an involuntary emotion on one knee, as trembling he pressed it to his lips, exclaiming, as she much agitated withdrew her hand, forever hallowed be the sacred touch of spotless purity; how blessed the man on whom those eyes are turned with partial favour! Oh! Anna, still does the crimson glow animate that charming face, and still you are disturbed; fear not me, my lovely friend; be assured you are safe from every thought of injury. I would be the champion of your honour, my life's blood should freely flow in your defence, but my soul respects the union of hearts; not even for *you* would I tinge my honour with a wish to break the peace of confidential love; why then this silence, this reserve? Ah! exclaimed he, I see the reason!

Out of the opposite path from the wood, with hasty step and disturbed countenance, to the surprise of Anna, came Wilkinson,

A deeper glow if possible now took possession of her features, while he, without returning her salute, fiercely passed them; not knowing why, her confusion increased, she turned to look after him, and met the eyes of Herbert, bent on her with pensive, tho' observant looks. "I see," Miss Mansel," said he, sighing, "the imprudence I have been guilty of; happy," "happy man; but I will set him right." With those words he darted after him, leaving Anna without power to detain him; though she wanted not inclination to rectify the error she saw him under; he soon returned arm in arm with Wilkinson, begging forgiveness for his behaviour.

Anna, bridling, said, she really was not offended; Wilkinson attempted to take her hand; heavens, what an insult! What would Charles Herbert think? Her eyes struck fire.

I have before observed she was very warm in her resentments, and her countenance shewing the emotions of her mind, Mr. Herbert very prudently walked away, leaving the lover to plead his

own

own cause ; the moment he was gone, the assured look it had cost Wilkinson great pain to assume, dropped into dejection and despair.

Sadly convinced, no hopes now remained for him, but those founded upon the mistake of Mr. Herbert, he trembled at the idea of a discovery ; yet he wanted not penetration to see that his conduct, far from conciliating the affection of Anna, provoked and disgusted her ; but still he had hopes, and while those remained, could not prevail on himself to change a conduct which appeared to be the only means of preserving it ; but now, when alone with her, who well knew the fallacy of the reports he had circulated, or at least encouraged, what could he plead in support of, what plainly appeared to her, a piece of contemptible art !

He fell at her feet, implored her compassion ; the artifice love had suggested was the only one he knew, he had therefore only to give vent to his feelings to be very eloquent ; he deprecated her anger, entreated her pardon, and pleaded the

irresistible impulse of the fondest passion; he wept and kneeled alternately.

The heart of Anna, naturally soft and tremblingly alive to sympathy and compassion, was now unaccountably hardened; she saw, for the first time, a duplicity that hurt her the more, as it was plainly the effect of premeditated design; and when she reflected that Mr. Herbert, (*tho' his opinion was nothing to her*) was the dupe of that design, all the anger and resentment in her disposition was levelled at Wilkin-son; and should she continue her walk to the castle with him, would it not be confirming by her own act, a deception on her friends. Quick as thought she turned from the possibility of again letting him triumph in his success, and without deigning to reply, went back to the village, and surprised her friends by her re-appearance at the parsonage.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A String of Resolutions.

WILKINSON followed her steps, tho' all his pleading could not obtain an answer; she alledged a pain in her head as the excuse for her speedy return, and immediately retired to her chamber, followed by Mr. Mansel, who desired she would have some whey; she thankfully declined taking any thing, saying a little rest would certainly relieve her, and begged to be left quite alone.

Her reflections on the transactions of the morning were embittered by the disposition of mind in which Charles Herbert had left her; she again recalled to her memory every thing that had passed; confused as she was herself, the trembling of his hand as he held hers, yet dwelt on her

mind; his voice ever pleasing, was then modulated into a tenderness that thrilled through her heart; with what feeling did he express his friendship, amiable man! why should she deceive him? Why impose on Mrs. Herbert and Patty; for great as their friendship, and unreserved as their intimacy had been, love had never been the subject of their confidence.

If Miss Herbert had any attachment of that kind, she had not disclosed it to Anna; she had heard (who in the neighbourhood had not?) the terms Wilkinson was on with her friend, and she observed nothing in the behaviour of either, violently to contradict it; but as Anna never entered upon the subject, and as Patty rather avoided than sought her confidence, it was yet mentioned by them; the lover was evidently the most fond and attentive of men, and Anna the most easy and indifferent of women; but knowing her circumstances, it was natural to infer it was a match on her side of convenience, more especially as it was

was not till very lately, (nor yet seen by Miss Herbert,) that Wilkinson's civilities were disgusting, or that he was very rapidly incurring the dislike of her he loved.

Whatever were the young lady's reasons, she had been totally silent on the subject; but her silence appeared to Anna, now that she revolved over every thing that had passed with respect to Wilkinson, the effect of his artifices, and she resolved no longer to suffer her to entertain such mistaken notions.

The deceiving her friend, was *now* a matter of infinite importance; she would beg Mrs. Mansel to decline the hateful visits of Wilkinson; she would inform Mrs. Herbert of her repugnance to the match; she would intreat her dear Patty to assist her in reconciling all parties to her determination, of hearing no more of a passion she never had, nor ever could approve.

This resolution cured the head ach; and was no sooner formed, than, impatient to put it in practice, she went down stairs.

Mr.

Mr. Mansel was in his study; the earnest and attentive posture she found him in, listening to Wilkinson, who was in agitated and serious discourse, together with the tears which were rolling down the wan cheeks of Mrs. Mansel, disconcerted and surprised her; they were no less embarrassed at her appearance, which put a sudden period to their conversation.

But too much bent upon freeing herself from addresses she so much disliked, and determined on immediately throwing herself on the indulgence of Mrs. Mansel, her confusion for a moment only prevented the commencement of her plan; her head full of what it was her intention to say to her friend, she begged her company round the garden; and full indeed it must have been, to suffer her to make such a request, as months had elapsed since that lady had put her foot to the ground, her lameness obliging her to have a bed below, to which she was lifted, not being able to get up stairs.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mansel looked her surprise, and without answering, pointed to her lame leg then on a stool. Anna immediately felt the folly of her inconsiderate conduct, and still more disconcerted, begged her pardon, for having a moment forgot a Calamity, she so sincerely deplored. To this apology, the tears of sensibility and gratitude gave an unspeakable grace, and all was forgotten.

Wilkinson, to her great mortification, stayed to dinner; a servant soon after being sent by Miss Herbert, to ask the reason of Anna's not coming as she promised, was returned with an excuse of her having been taken ill.

In the afternoon Mr. Mansel generally rode out, for the purposes of giving his beloved wife the air behind him. Mrs. Mansel, as she had Anna at home, would have declined it; but *she*, ever forgetting her own in the interest of her friends, urged them to go, not recollecting that she must either stay at home in the most disagreeable *tête à tête* with Wilkinson,

or

or by accompanying them, be seen again as his companion abroad; of two evils, she chose the last as least; a little pad they kept for her was therefore got ready, and out they sallied.

But as this was to be a day of mortification to our heroine, they had not gone a quarter of a mile from the parsonage, before they were met by Mr. and Miss Herbert, coming to make a charitable visit to their sick friend. The raillery of Miss Herbert, not more than the grave looks of Charles, threw Anna into confusion; the very thing she had resolved to avoid, she was now doing. Wilkinson kept his station close by her side, and spite of all she had resolved, again exhibited the successful lover. Patty, ignorant of what had happened, and still continuing good naturedly to rally, and chide her by turns, for disappointing them of the pleasure of her company, to the astonishment of all present, Anna burst into a violent flood of tears.

Miss

Miss Herbert, alarmed and grieved at the effect of her harmless mirth, made a thousand apologies; Mr. Mansel's looks spoke more than his words; and Mrs. Mansel's eye glistened in sympathetic tenderness; Wilkinson was officiously kind; Mr. Herbert's countenance underwent a thorough change; the grave cast gave place to tenderness and compassion, yet during their short ride he spoke very little, and appeared glad when it was ended.

Miss Herbert staid tea with her friend, but her brother set off on a hard gallop before they entered the village, as his mother, he said, would expect him; and Wilkinson had half an hour's private conversation with the rector, before he waited on Miss Herbert home.

The moment they were gone, Anna, whose whole heart was full of her design, and who had suffered unspeakably from the delay of a few hours, related the occurrence of the morning, and her indignation at Wilkinson's conduct, which was increased by the conviction, that he wished

wished to make people believe she was engaged to him; and concluded with begging that Mrs. Mansel would indulge her, by declining his constant visits, or at least permit her to refuse his particular attendance on herself.

Both her friends appeared much distressed at the determined manner of her expressing her dislike, it grieved them to find she had taken to a person, whose disinterested affection they had hoped would surmount all her objections. Mrs. Mansel answered, she was exhausted by her ride, but would talk the matter over with her in the morning; when, if she continued inflexible, they would press, what in their opinion was of the greatest moment to her, no more.

Anna, who had always thought what her governess said,

Wifest, virtuousst, discreetest, best,
understood, to her great concern, that what she asked, would, if granted, be owing to their indulgence to her, in opposition to their own judgment, as well as wishes; and this idea doubled all her obligations.

obligations to them ; they forebore to urge her to accept a settlement, which would ease them of the expence of supporting her, an expence she trembled to think they could so ill afford, as Mrs. Mansel's illness had been, and still was, of the nature to require the first advice and assistance, which was procured with great cost, from the distance at which doctors of any eminence resided.

It is true, Lady Edwin's generosity had been extremely acceptable to them on that account, but that was a resource not likely to continue ; and to live always on the bounty of friends was insupportable ; yet to marry merely for a maintenance was worse, as it was offering injury in return for love.

Those thoughts kept her awake most part of the night, and she rose in the morning to meet her friend, with pale face and swelled eyes.

Mrs. Mansel slept very little better ; her care for the welfare of the young person she tenderly loved, and for whose prosperity she had the most maternal solicitude, in-

decrease

creased, as her own feelings convinced her she should be soon called from a world, where, notwithstanding her christian resignation, her affections were so strongly bound; she foresaw if Anna was not settled, she must have many difficulties to encounter, and if Mr. Mansel should likewise be called away, he had nothing to leave her; alone, in a world, where innocence and honour are the common prey of mankind, and where triumphant vice looks into silence the pleas of modest merit, of what service would be the delicacy of her sentiments, the rectitude of her principles, or the elegant simplicity of her manners? Her beautiful person, far from being of advantage, what would it excite, but the spirit of seduction, in the men, and envy in the women! Who would protect her! and how would it be possible for her, whose heart sought alliance with all God's creatures, to be guarded against wiles, she had no conception of! or to support her disappointment, when, after mixing with mankind, she should be sadly convinced, that the virtues she honoured,

and the benevolence she adored, existed so sparingly among the sons of men.

Mr. Wilkinson had exceedingly alarmed and distressed her, by his account of the interview in the wood; he saw, or fancied he saw, a growing attachment between young Herbert and Anna; the first he concealed, but gave the latter with all he had observed, and all that fear and jealousy painted to his own jaundiced imagination, in the most glowing colour to Mr. and Mrs. Mansel; he exaggerated the youthful gaiety of Herbert into a spirit of libertinism; and adduced the dissipation of the father, the dependence of the son on the Edwins, and the well known pride of that family, as reasons why it was impossible, he could address her on honourable terms.

Mrs. Mansel was too well acquainted with the innate purity of her pupil, to doubt her being betrayed into any blameable or imprudent act, but she was not so secure with respect to her peace; she had a great share of sensibility, and so perfectly artless, that nothing like suspicion approached

proached her ideas; she was therefore the more likely to be the victim of credulity in her first impressions. Mrs Mansel's knowledge of Herbert's family concerns confirmed Wilkinfon's report, who, under so respectable a sanction, ventured to hint the injury to the peace, as well as character, of Anna, her intimacy with so dangerous and insinuating a young man, might produce; and added, the only effectual method to preserve the honour of their relation, was to unite thier interest with his entreaties, to prevail on her to become his wife.

Mr. Mansel readily coincided with this advice; and the alarm given by the intelligence of the jealous lover being confirmed by the behaviour of Anna, induced Mrs. Mansel to promise her influence, but at the same time she conditioned with her husband, that if they found the peace of Anna likely to be affected by her compliance with their request, it should be at once given up; and as the salt water had been prescribed to Mrs. Mansel, she would take her with them to Swansea, where the

the rector had a relation, from whom they had received strong invitations, and keep her there till Mr. Herbert left Mandore; absolutely declining, though much urged, to attempt to fetter her inclination.

When Anna attended her friend, overpowered with a sense of obligation, and expecting the strongest efforts in favour of a man she thoroughly disliked, in the light he proposed himself; sorrow and apprehension deprived her the power of utterance, and she stood before Mrs. Mandore the emblem of silent dejection; the tears rolled down her cheeks from her averted eyes, but the kindness of her maternal friend reassured and comforted her; her questions were equally answered with kindness and wisdom; and the cool, yet strenuous efforts made in favour of Wilkinson, had the aid of reason and interest to support them; his unbounded affection, his opulent prospects, his present eligible settlement, and unimpeached moral character, were urged in opposition to the repugnance avowed by Anna,

Anna, who, ashamed of having no argument to offer but what originated in self-interest, while all those of her friends were so noble, and utterly disinterested, heard in silence the pleadings of friendship in behalf of love, unable to procure from her single hope, or to draw her out of a silence the most decisive against the point she sought to carry. Mrs. Mansel, at length assured her, that she would no farther urge the matter on which depended her peace; that an awful moment she knew was approaching; that her heart had built on it as the sweetest cordial, hope could give; that when, in fond contemplation of the beauties both of her mind and person, she had a sad prospect of her destitute situation, which she should be no more, (particularly as Mr. Mansel was likewise to meet an early fate) overcame her; that then she sought and received consolation in the security of her peace and welfare, under the protection of an honest man, whose principles and power were equally flattering to her wishes: but if she must give up this darling prospect, she entreated Anna

would indulge her with one promise, which was that of consulting Mr. Mansel on the disposal of her heart, before it was too late to recal it.

Anna, drowned in tears at this affectionate speech, delivered with a painful solemnity by the person she most loved and respected on earth, whose countenance spoke at once the ravage of sickness, and too, too plainly confirmed the melancholy presage which flowed from her lips, in an agony of grief, threw herself at her feet.

Oh! my more than mother, cried she; her voice interrupted, and almost choaked by the violence of her emotions, dear, blessed monitress of my youth, ever kind and valued friend of my heart, spare, oh! spare your Anna; can I rob you of one moment's happiness! is it *me*, who would die to give you pleasure, that takes from the peace of your dying hours; that sharpens the keen edge of pain? Oh! dispose of me as you please! I am yours! teach me how to repay the tenderness you have shewn my helpless youth, to cheer the heavy hour of sickness, and be assured

whatever are the secret sacrifices I make, however strong my repugnance, and unconquerable my dislike, I never never more will oppose your wishes, I will, bursting into fresh tears, if you bid me, to morrow give my hand to Mr. Wilkinson!

Oh! Anna, my dearest girl, returned Mrs. Mansel, this extorted consent must not be on so solemn an engagement; I doubted not but my entreaties would have this effect on your ductile heart; but to take advantage of your grateful sorrow for a departing friend, would be to engrave her on your memory, with the bitter accompaniment of remindless grief, without hope of change, but the awful one that will reunite us. I will urge you no more; be comforted, continued Mrs. Mansel; far be it from me to discourage my Anna, by insinuating, that the world, bad as it is, has no accommodation for innocence and virtue, without uniting them in opposition to inclination. But oh! my child, embracing her, though I could see you enter the busy scenes to which you are yet a stranger, without a single appre-

apprehension for your honour, here even here, I tremble for your tranquility; be upon your guard; you are deserving of every thing; but alas! it is not the most deserving that are the most happy.

She then entreated the weeping orphan to preserve the same appearance to Wilkinson, till their return from the excursion she proposed, when they would entirely put a period to addresses which were so disagreeable, but not once hinting her suspicion of the partiality she had been accused of; rightly concluding, if it had any other foundation than Wilkinson's jealousy, time, absence, and her own good sense, would be much more likely to operate, while the secret was confined to her own bosom, than if she had the least reason to suppose it was discovered.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Polite Friendship.

THE preparation they were now to make for their little journey, prevented so much of her time being spent at Llandore Castle; and another reason to restrain her visits there, if she were earnest in her resolutions, was the arrival of Cecilia Edwin, who with both her cousins, surprized Anna in a deep reverie, looking across the vale at the white chimnies of Llandore.

If the year which had passed since the meeting of Cecilia and my heroine, had matured the personal as well as mental graces of the latter, it had not been less busy nor made fewer alterations, in those of the former. The winter spent in London, where she had been presented, and
where

where her great fortune and family, and their consequent attractions, had stamp'd their own value in pretty legible characters, on every part of her behaviour, and actions, were circumstances that could not fail of enlarging those ideas of gallantry, which in her earlier years had influenced her conduct, tho' they had not quite effaced the impressions love and heroism had made over her mind—She was at present a kind of middle character, between a sentimental novelist, and a town coquette; her dress was so much to the very extreme of the fashion, that it was not in the remote region of Llandore only she was an object of wonder and curiosity, for she had the satisfaction of being generally stared at in the metropolis.

Her clear brown complexion, where the blood had formerly been seen to mount on every little occasion, was now hid by the politer daubings of rouge; and her fine glossy black hair, lost in a paste of pink-powder and pomatum. Anna was the sweetest girl in the world, and her confi-

dential friend, with whom she regularly corresponded; yet it was matter of wonder now how her cousin Patty could exist in that corner of the world, with no other companion than such a demure piece of still life; she was nevertheless in raptures at the sight of her, though really it was with regret she observed great alteration in her, and it mortified her to say, those alterations were not for the better.

This opinion of Miss Edwin, was not only contradictory to *our* sentiments, but *her own*; she felt that partial as she was to her *dear* self, the advantage of her sweet friend, was too great for the candour, or sincerity of so very fine a lady; but whatever other changes had happened in the course of the winter, Charles Herbert was still her male favourite, although it was no fault of Miss Edwin, that she yet retained her name; a peer not much older than her father, Sir William, having been a very warm advocate for her changing it to his own, but was refused by Lady Edwin,

win, on account of the obscure original of his parent.

Cecilia Edwin finding in her collection of new novels that the amiable heroines of most of them were married, and not only contrived to keep their old lovers, but attract new ones, notwithstanding their coverture, found great temptations in the title and riches of Lord Sutton, and not foreseeing her mother's objection had already obliged most of her corresponding friends with an account of the severity of that fate, which, in obedience to the commands of her parents, had obliged her to unite herself to a rich disagreeable old man, while her heart was attached to the most amiable; the most charming youth in the world.

That youth she now shone on, in full lustre, the regard he actually had for so near a relation, the respect due to her rank, and immense fortune, and the consideration of family obligations, all operated on the mind of young Herbert, and induced him to treat Cecilia with affection as well as politeness; when they walked, she hung

on his arm ; he was her escort when on horse-back ; and tho' he said he did not *now* love dancing, when he was forced into it, Cecilia was his partner, and he was her beau on every occasion ; indeed, she had not a doubt of her absolute rule in his heart ; but however pleasing such a lover was in the country, shew, equipage, and the dear round of fashionable pleasures, were in London a thousand times more delightful ; so that tho' she yet professed, and did feel a penchant for her cousin Charles, she by no means designed him the supreme favour of her hand and fortune.

Cecilia's idea of the increasing love of Mr. Herbert was in some degree confirmed by an alteration in his temper, and she imputed it to the respectful timidity that tied his tongue ; this alteration was, I must own, not of the most brilliant kind ; from the best tempered, chearful creature existing, he was become peevish and melancholy ; man delighted not him, whatever women might do ; even Cecilia's company was often avoided, and a solitary ramble preferred

preferred to her lively conversation; his appetite failed, and a general languor pervaded his whole frame; Mrs. Herbert, grieved at an alteration, which alarmed her for his health, and Mr. Herbert, who hated Wales himself, condemned that charming retirement as the cause of his son's change.

When the ladies surprised our heroine, as I have related, at the parsonage, she was deep in thought on the instability of all human felicity; Miss Edwin's arrival at Llandore she had heard of, and figured to herself the same happy parties, in which she had heretofore been; her seat in the grove, her voice in the Trio, her courted judgment and applause at the readings, were now assumed by Cecilia,—and a deep sigh followed those reflections.—tears starting into her eyes, when they were dispersed by the sight of those who had excited them.

Miss Herbert severely reproached our heroine for her long and frequent absences from the castle; and Cecilia insisted no-
C 5 thing

thing now must keep her from thence. The emaciated looks and weak state of health in which they saw Mrs. Mansel, were Anna's best apology for the seeming neglect of her friends, and the intended journey to the sea mentioned with regret, as she would still longer be deprived of the honour of attending them; the ladies, however, would not stir, without her promise of spending some part of every day with them till her departure.

Mrs. Mansel, tho' the company of my heroine was the only thing besides that of her husband's, in which she delighted, considering the importance of the acquaintance of people of rank to her young orphan, readily consented to their request, and she engaged to spend the next day with them.

This appointment was a dagger to the heart of Wilkinfon, who was present, but it was not to be prevented, nor, what was worse, could he possibly attend her, as he was engaged to go to Bristol on business of the iron works with Mr. Herbert; he
was

was lost in the anguish of his own reflections when the Llandore family left the parsonage, and as Anna, (intent on her own thoughts, sat at the window, her eye eagerly following their steps, as they descended the slope, but soon unable to conquer her emotions) turned from the sight of the gay Cecilia, hanging on the arm of her cousin Charles, and meeting the dejected look of her desponding lover, all her dislike changed to pity.

Low spirits, a complaint very new to her, she had been lately much troubled with; a fit now seized her, tears filled her eyes, and sighs rent her bosom: Wilkinson saw not one, nor heard the other; his heart was too full of his own vexation, to attend to any thing else; and to prevent a renewal of the intimacy at the Castle, was the subject of his present meditation; Anna had long left the room before he was sensible he was alone; no remedy, no invention offering to aid his wishes, he was obliged to take leave of the family, with his heart torn by regret, jealousy and apprehension.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

More Love Matters.

THE next morning after having tried every gown and cap her wardrobe afforded, and consulted for a much longer period than usual, her glass, before it was possible to determine on those most becoming her complexion, Anna at last fixed on a sprigged muslin gown, tied with laylock ribband, a chip hat, decorated with the same colour, and her own fine hair, fastened up with a comb.

Blooming and fresh as the blowing myrtle in her bosom, she began her way to the Castle by the same path, where she had the interview with Herbert, which was so deeply engraved on her memory; when the turning path presented itself to her view, her conscious blood mounted in her

her cheek, a sigh involuntary forced its way—she stopped.

A rustling among the trees announced an intruder, who appeared in the distant figure of Herbert;—he was presently before her.

He apologized for a second time intruding on her privacy, and asked with a smile, “ am I now in danger of interrupting an assignation ? ”

Anna, picqued at the question, walked on with a slight courtesy.

The offence was increased by a farther enquiry, whether the happiest of *all* happy men were to meet, or overtake her ?

When he spoke intelligibly, she would answer.

He saw she was angry, he told her ; but froward spirits, spoiled by indulgence, were apt to be ungovernable.

“ Meaning mine, Sir ? answered Anna.

Oh, no ! returned he, sighing.

Mr. Wilkinson’s then ?

“ Nor him neither ! ”

Your

Your own Sir? smiling.

Ah! answered Herbert, that smile, that look!—yes, madam, I own, mine is the ungovernable, the forward, and repining spirit, your indulgence has ruined.

Anna looked astonished.

You are surprized—but do you conceive it nothing, to be blest in your society! to hear the accents of divinity from your lips! to have no one desire beyond beholding you! to be fed by your smiles, with the fond hopes of your friendship! and have those blessings dearer, heaven knows, than existence, at once torn away! to see absence and cold reserve take place of friendship, and condescension! Ah! Anna, never, never may you feel the anguish of unrequited *friendship*!

But I leave you—whatever are my own feelings, let me not a second time wound yours.

With these words, the unaccountable Herbert disappeared, leaving Anna in a state of mind, that would have again tempted

tempted her return to the parsonage, had she not feared to alarm her friends.

With trembling steps she pursued the path to the Castle, and was met at a little distance from it by Miss Edwin and Patty Herbert; Charles soon joining them, in company with some young ladies and gentlemen, who by invitation dined there.

A harp and violin being in the neighbourhood, Mrs. Herbert procured their attendance; and a little ball in the afternoon gave Miss Edwin an opportunity of exhibiting to advantage her graceful person in a minuet with young Herbert; they were both deservedly applauded; and a young lady who sat by Anna, whispered her, the two cousins looked born for each other; it was pity they should ever be parted; did not she think so? She bowed assent, but her tongue refused its office. A partner in the country dances offering, she stood up, glad to escape a discourse, she found herself unable to support.

When

When they broke up and Mrs. Herbert's carriage waited to carry Anna home, her breast bow was lost; she was sure she had it on when she went down the dance; that Patty confirmed; some invisible power had certainly secreted it;—the room was searched over and over; no bow could be found, and she was obliged to go home without it; the same ill success attended her enquiries next morning—it was no more heard of.

Anna continued her daily visits to the Castle; their party *quarée* was enlivened by little concerts; Herbert played very well on the flute; Cecilia took her harp, Patty her guittar, and Anna sat to the organ; they walked, they chatted; every heart seemed in unison, even Cecilia's forgot its gay flirtations, and rested on the peaceful delights of friendship and retirement; but a sad, a fatal reverse awaited our young heroine.

Mrs. Mansel grew daily worse; her declining health filled Anna with grief and anguish;

anguish; the day was fixed for their departure, and she went for the last time to the Castle, where as it was to be a farewell visit, she stayed the night; the solemn cloud which overspreads the interview of friends who are on the point of parting, was never more visible than in this evening at Llandore Castle; restless and uneasy, they all retired early; and the morning on which Anna was to be taken from this scene of felicity, broke on her sleepless eyes with little comfort, and less hope.

Tired of a bed on which she had unavailingly courted rest, in hopes the air would help to dispel the oppression of her heart, she walked out; the dear spot she was about to leave contained her warmest affections; Miss Herbert would be gone, before she returned; Mrs. Mansel's health in such a melancholy state, what alterations might not happen, for ever to divide her from characters she loved and revered? Mr. Herbert and Cecilia would undoubtedly soon be united; God bless them, said she aloud,

aloud, just as she was met by the identical bridegroom her fancy had painted.

“ And who, Miss Mansel, is so happy as
“ to be the object of your early orisons?
“ had my friend Wilkinson been here, he
“ would have been pleased at your emp-
“ phatical *them*, since such solicitude for
“ one even of your own sex, must be en-
“ viable.”

Is it not natural, Sir, returned she, for me, who have so many obligations to the inhabitants of the place I am so soon to leave, to be fervent in my wishes for their happiness?

And were they then, Madam, the subjects of your thoughts! and may I ask, were the males of the family included in the blessing?

Indeed, Sir, they were, said Anna, with the most engaging earnestness and simplicity.

And God bless you too, most amiable and lovely of women, answered Herbert;
“ I have much to be forgiven for, Miss
“ Mansel;

“ Mansel ; but I know so well the sweetness of your disposition, I have no fear, but my heart, if laid open at your feet, would be more the object of your compassion than resentment ; if I have been the unhappy source of uneasiness to you, believe me it was without design ; the efforts of reason, reflection, and honour, may have been in some few moments since I have known you, too weak to conquer feelings that have received additional strength from current circumstances, or to conceal wishes incompatible with my own peace and yours ; yet, in my lucid intervals, and those I trust are many, my whole soul is interested in your honour and felicity ; adieu, Madam, if my indiscretions revive in your imaginations, remember in the moment when my heart was bursting with its secret woe, I prayed for your happiness, and tore myself away.”

“ Remember !” repeated the agitated Anna. “ Oh ! that I could learn to forget,”

"get," following his quick steps with her swimming eyes, as he left her.

It was not possible now to misconstrue his meaning; hopes, which he had hitherto repelled, filled her heart; his trembling, his faltering, his hesitation, could have but one source.

And am I then, said she, exultingly, beloved by Charles Herbert! who can tell, if blessed with birth and fortune, I might have been his choice; enviable attractions! did I ever regret your want before!

But I may admire his virtues, I may respect his principles, nay I may love the guarded purity of his passion, while I am single, without injuring myself or him; and what is there on this side heaven, that can give an equivalent for even so poor a gratification?

This interview gave Anna spirits; she returned to the house, and after spending the day there, she was fetched home by the rector, who then took leave of the young ladies, Mrs. Herbert having been so good as to take her tea at the parsonage

age with the worthy Mrs. Mansel, with whom she parted with the sincerest wishes for the re-establishment of her health, and regret for the occasion of their separation. Herbert did not appear; he had rode out, and returned not till Anna had left the Castle.

A N N A.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The House of Mourning.

THE following morning Mr. and Mrs. Mansel, with Anna, set out for Swansea.

Neither the salutary sea breezes, nor the briny medicine, were of the least service to Mrs. Mansel, whose disorder increased beyond all human aid; and her weakness sometimes rendering it impossible to carry her in a chaise; willing to try every thing, she was conveyed by water to the Bristol Hot Wells.

Here she continued till after Christmas, in vain hopes of receiving benefit from the waters and physicians. Mr. Mansel's distress is not to be conceived.—To gratify him only, his beloved wife staid there; but

but at last, finding all would not do, she begged to resign her breath at the Parsonage; and so eager was the worthy woman to get there, she supported herself in her long journey much better than could be expected.

She was brought in a litter the last four stages, followed by the tears and prayers of the inhabitants, through the village to her own house; where with an unruffled mind and quiet conscience, she waited the eternal fiat.

During the awful interval that passed between the time when every hope of her recovery had left them to that of her dissolution, the anguish of her husband and young friend may be better conceived than described.

The solemn and hopeless inquiries of the neighbours, the lamentations of the poor, the grief of the servants, were faint epitomies of the severe sorrows of the inconsolable husband, and of the affectionate orphan.

The

The parsonage, so late the scene of perfect tranquillity, of chearful content, and uninterrupted peace, was now literally a house of mourning.

In this scene of poignant sorrow, although every moment when absent from the dying saint's apartment, Anna was drowned in tears by her bed-side she was the serene companion of the friend she loved; she was her nurse, she read to her; and when the broken-hearted husband could officiate in his holy office, fervently joined in the sacred devotion of a death bed; while Mrs. Mansel dosed, with true filial piety she exerted her utmost power to comfort the grieving rector, though her own feelings were unsupportable.

On the 28th of January, after very strong struggles for one who had been gradually weakening so long, it pleased God to take to himself a woman who had served him all her days: her resignation and fortitude during her painful and lingering disorder, was the last, and not least valuable lesson left to Anna, in whose arms she expired; and

and who, contrary to the modes of the times which authorises depositing the corpse of our best friend in a vacant apartment, continued to sit and sleep in the room until the eighth day; when, having (led by Mr. Mansel, and followed by the parishioners of Llandore) seen her remains deposited in the chancel of the church, they retired, each to their apartments, unable to meet at that table where now the voice that cheered and instructed, was heard no more.

Her last injunctions to Anna were to follow the counsel of Mr. Mansel; and her last request to her husband, never to forsake or deny parental care to the child of her heart.

Mr. Mansel had a maiden sister who had been sent for by Mrs. Mansel (when at Swansea she saw no hope of her speedy return) to take care of the family, and had, at Anna's request, been continued in the house. After Mrs. Mansel's death, her stay was still necessary; but if it had not been so, she would have had no inclination to leave a warm, full house, for her own

little cottage, where she lived on a very small income.

Mrs. Jane Manfel was in the fiftieth year of her celibacy, and valued herself on her notability and fine shape; few women could vie with her in either; she was, indeed, saving to a proverb, and small to a fault: she was ill tempered, sandy haired, and fallow complectioned; she had not yet given up the hopes of matrimony, for which purpose, ever since she had resided at the Parsonage, she had been making a hoard of every thing in kind to tempt, where no other attraction was to be found.

Such a substitute for the saint they had lost, soon occasioned an alteration in the parson's family: the man and maid, who were the happy domestics of the best manager and mistress on earth, resigned their places, which were immediately filled by those, who knew nothing more than was necessary in a common farm house, and who, from a similarity of minds and manners, were the favourites of Mrs. Jane.

When

When Mr Mansel was present, nothing could exceed the fawning speciousness of this woman's behaviour to Anna; but the moment his back was turned, her never-failing topics were lessons of industry to young people, delivered *to* her maid, but evidently meant *at* Anna.—She hated to see those who are able, and having nothing of their own, unwilling to work, loitering about as if their whole business in the world was to be maintained at other people's expence.

Those lectures, which had always witnessed, and her own want of spirits, which were sunk to the lowest ebb, soon lessened the consequence of Anna at the Parsonage, and placed her in a situation very little to be envied. She did not like, by informing Mr. Mansel of his sister's conduct, to embroil him in family dispute, and much less did she choose to submit to the insults of a woman; who, if she had been of a tolerable temper, was so extremely ignorant and low bred, it was impossible to associate with her.

Mr. Mansel's grief for his wife was of the kind to last long; it vented not itself in words, it subsided not in the overflowings which dropped from his eyes; his soul was the mansion of integrity; *there*, in every sentiment, in every thought, he found renewed the memory of his Maria: nothing of goodness struck his imagination unaccompanied with her idea; the violence of his sorrow, indeed, abated, as he brought himself to consider she had but preceded him in the rich reward of virtue. But when alone, when he could uninterruptedly recal her voice, her action, and her wisdom, he fancied himself yet in her society; he was, therefore, seldom visible but in the discharge of his duties and at meals; nor was it always that he accompanied them on those occasions; the chearful board, the innocent chat, the comfortable fireside were now no more; and Anna so constantly reminded of this, began to conceive the living a burden on honest pains-taking people, shameful and unnecessary: yet loath to hurt or offend

Mr.

Mr. Mansel, it was with great reluctance, and not till personally and directly affronted by Mrs. Jane, she could raise her spirits sufficiently to propose leaving him.

Mr. Mansel heard her with sorrow and surprise; he entreated her to consider well the step she was taking; questioned her about his family; begged she would modulate it as she pleased. Wilkinson, though he called sometimes, had received his definitive answer: *he* was no longer troublesome, what could be her motives?

Fully resolved to conceal the cause of her disgust, and too much irritated to remain subject to the ignorant caprice of Mrs. Jane, she said it was necessary for her to lay down some plan for her way of life. Servitude must be her last resource: she heard there were means in the metropolis by which women of good education might earn a decent subsistence, with a tolerable appearance: and another strong motive for her wishing to go, was her desire to learn every particular of her origin, that

she might try to get some knowledge of her family.

Mr. Mansel, who knew it was not in his power to provide longer for her than he lived, felt the propriety of her reasons though he secretly wished she had not been so nice about servitude, as he thought the Edwins might have assisted her: he, therefore, ceased to oppose her intentions, but took every method to make her journey comfortable.

The fifty pounds Lady Edwin sent her remained untouched, notwithstanding all the money Mrs. Mansel had saved was expended, and some debts unavoidably contracted; this money and Mrs. Mansel's clothes he insisted on her taking; every thing belonging to her departed friend was dear to her: but as to the note, all his pleadings could not induce her to take more than twenty pounds.

Still the good man was very loath to part with her; but finding her bent on going, he took her himself to Brecknock, and having obtained the promise from her of
returning

returning to him, as her home, they parted with tears and regret on both sides; his last words as he put her in the coach being, "Remember you have a home, and "I am your father."

CHAPTER XXX.

A Journey to London.

ANNA took Bath in her way, and was received by Mrs. Herbert and Patty with the same kindness and friendship she was used to at Llandore. They pressed her to stay but she was too eager to get to London, to comply with their invitation. She hinted to them her circumstances, and Mrs. Herbert insisted on troubling her with a card to Lady Edwin, Cecilia being with Miss Turbville in Bedfordshire;

and Patty told her, with great joy, that her Cousin Hugh, who was expected every day, was to be married as soon as he came, when they should all be in London. They agreed to continue their correspondence; and after two days stay, Anna again set out on her journey.

She was met by Mr. Dalton at the inn, who was apprized of her coming by a letter from Mr. Mansel.

The time which had passed so happily with our heroine, had produced many alterations in the situation of Dalton; the clergyman, to whose humanity he owed his curacy, was dead, and his successor chose to place a relation of his own in the cure. A twelvemonth had passed without any prospect of again meeting an employ that would feed his family. Unsuccessful in all his applications for a church, he, at last, sought favour among his old friends the Methodists; from one of those people he got a recommendation to a gentleman who headed and patronized the sect, and was indeed a good Samaritan.

In

In pofeffion of a large and clear eftate, as well as merchandize to all parts of the globe, Mr. Thornhill had the power of putting into practice the lovely attributes of charity and benevolence, as literally laid down by his divine Preceptor; to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to pour balm into the wounds of enemies as well as friends, were the bufinefs of his life; if, in the extenfive line of his charities, he knew a preference, it was to the ftrict profeffors of his own religion; a partiality the more excufable, as never the afflicted of either fex were turned unrelieved from his gates. This gentleman, in the fervency of his zeal, had lately built a fmall chapel in a village about fix miles from the metropolis; the number of artificers employed in its neighbourhood was a temptation to the good man to endow it, and place there a preacher who would be attentive and induftrious in his holy calling.

Dalton's application for charity, as a preacher with a numerous offspring out of bread,

bread, and destitute of means for their support, fortunately came at this period to the hands of Mr. Thornhill, whose compassion for the individual was increased by his general good will to his fellow creatures, on whose account the chapel was erected; he relieved the necessities, painted in a very strong light by Dalton, and placed him in the new meeting, rent free, and gave him fifty pounds a year for life. In this situation he was when he received the unwelcome news of Anna's return to his protection; however, by his wife's advice, he went to the inn where the coach stopt, in order to conduct her to his house.

Mrs. Dalton received her very kindly, and her kindness was much increased by the present of a brown satin night gown of Mrs. Mansel's for herself, and all the remains of the finery brought from Melmoth Lodge, as well as the clothes she had outgrown since, for her children, who were disposed of different ways, except the eldest daughter, who had served out her apprenticeship to the mantuamaker, and now worked

worked at her business, paying her father for her board and lodging.

The next morning Dalton told Anna, with very little ceremony, it was time for her to think of some mode of living, without being a hanger-on from one to the other. These were her own sentiments; but she could have dispensed with his coarse opinion on the matter, delivered without feeling or judgment. The contrast between this address and those she had lately been used to, struck her so forcibly, she could not immediately answer; and her silence being interpreted by him into a design of fixing herself on him, he wisely resolved to let her know, she must not expect to live with him; and he was on the point of being still less attentive to the laws of hospitality, when a question from her brought the blood into the cheeks of himself and his wife. It was to know the particulars of his first meeting her; when and where it was; and lastly, what the things that were brought by the de-

ceased to the lodgings consisted of, and what was become of them?

After a little pause, which, if our heroine had the least knowledge of guilt herself, must have given birth to suspicions not very favourable to her reverend friend, he told her where she was brought by her father, but that not only the woman who came with her was moved, that the very house (which was true) was pulled down, and another built on the spot; that the things consisted of a few wearables, which had been sold without reserve to defray the expences of the funeral; and that he had, by advertisement, and every enquiry in his power, endeavoured to find out to whom she belonged, without success; that by the sun-burnt complexion of both the man and woman, he concluded they came from abroad.

This account entirely banished every hope of learning any thing of her origin. It was very unlikely she, who was so entirely ignorant of the world, should succeed better in her researches than Mr. Dalton,

son, who was so much interested in finding some one to take off his hands, a child, who had no other claims on him but those of charity.

Her next thought was to deliver Mrs. Herbert's card to Lady Edwin, in hopes, by that Lady's patronage, she might be able to fix on some means for her future subsistence.

She accordingly went in the morning stage, and was set down in Whitechapel. The streets were very dirty; wholly unacquainted with London and its customs, she had no idea of taking a coach; through the wet, therefore, she walked, inquiring at every turning the way to Grosvenor-square, which she reached in three hours, having sometimes received right directions, and oftener wrong, to the great entertainment of the witty crackers of so pleasant a joke.

Tired and splashed, at length she arrived at the door of Lady Edwin, which two or three chairs and a dozen powdered fops, in

in livery furrounded: these she had to push her way through.

The impudence, the vices, and the follies of their employers, are, in general, so exactly copied by those party-coloured gentlemen, that when I have said those in waiting belonged to some of the first and most dissipated families in the kingdom, I need not add, the sight of a modest young woman had in it too much novelty to pass unnoticed or insulted. With great difficulty (as they ran all their undaunted faces under her hat) she reached the porter, who, with a settled grin and witty sneer at his companions, stood waiting to receive her.

To her modest question of, "Is Lady Edwin at home?" she was answered with a gruff, No, and a supercilious stare; and then unfortunately her spotted clothes, attracting the notice of the too-well-kept, idle wretches round her, she was saluted with a loud laugh.

Astonished at such brutal rudeness, such wanton unprovoked insolence, and terrified with the apprehensions of what insults might

might farther be offered her, she was hastily going from the door, when a footman belonging to the house, struck with her beauty, recollecting Lady Edwin's woman had just discharged her maid, and promising himself (for he was a person of great gallantry) his present condescension might be rewarded with future favour, bid her come in, and civilly asked her business. Mrs. Herbert's name electrified the whole crew; those belonging to the visitors' chairs slunk off, and the surly porter taking the card, rang for Lady Edwin's own man who begged her to walk in; at the same time opening the door of an elegant and spacious parlour, said his lady had company, but he would deliver the card the moment they went.—Here to her great comfort she found a large fire, at which she dried her feet, and had time to set her clothes in a little better order, as it was full two hours before she was admitted to Lady Edwin.

The cordiality of her reception made ample amends for the mortifications she had

had received at the door: the lady embraced her with great affection, consoled with her on her sable dress, and expressed herself much pleased at Mrs. Herbert's sending her to Grosvenor-square.

Struck with a kindness she did not expect, our heroine burst into tears.

Lady Edwin's goodness increased with this mark of sensibility; she had a real regard for her, and when she heard from Mrs. Herbert, the declining state of Mrs. Mansel's health, she thought the having such a young person about her in quality of a companion, would be both convenient and agreeable:—Miss Edwin troubled her with very little of her company; she grew corpulent and indolent; public places she was weary of, and going out much fatigued without amusing her. Lady Edwin liked cards, and her routs were crowded by the first people; but there were many hours which an elegant sensible young woman would very acceptably fill; she, therefore, directly proposed to Anna living with her on the footing of a companion, and said she

she would compliment her with fifty pounds a year for clothes.

It cannot be doubted but this offer was gratefully accepted; and so desirous was the lady of having her immediately there, an early dinner was ordered, and the coach carried her to Dalton's, with directions to wait for and bring her back.

When Dalton saw so elegant a carriage stop at his door and Anna alight from it, he could scarce believe his eyes; with undisssembled joy he heard how fortunate she had been; he congratulated her upon her more brilliant prospects and, never out of his way, begged, if an opportunity offered, she would put in a word for him to Lady Edwin, whose poor countryman he was.

Her baggage not having been unpacked was soon ready, and once more Mr. Dalton had the pleasure of seeing himself freed from his care of Anna: she returned to Grosvenor-square early in the evening:—Lady Edwin, very much pleased with the gratitude and alacrity she had shewn, ordered a piece of black silk in addition to what

what she already had, and gave directions to her own tradespeople to equip her in a fashionable stile, as her night was to be the third after.

In the intermediate space she did not fail acquainting Mr. Mansel with her situation, or thanking Mrs. Herbert for the friendly recommendation which had procured her the honour of Lady Edwin's favour, a hair-dresser having cut and tortured her charming ringlets into likeness of nothing human, and dressed in fashionable mourning, Anna followed Lady Edwin into her drawing room.

CHAPTER XXXI.

High Life.

LADY Edwin's doors opened at nine, but it was near eleven before the card tables were all filled. This scene was perfectly novel to our heroine, and excited no less curiosity than wonder; she, who had hitherto looked on visiting as a method of keeping up the connection of families and friends, could not conceive the pleasure of entertaining such a number of people by a single courtesy to each person as they entered, and an arrangement of the tables, any more than she could reconcile it to her ideas of civility for people to leave the house without even that little ceremony, or bestowing a look at the lady of the mansion; the constant succession of feathered ladies and painted beaus, who just glided round the

the rooms and retired, particularly struck her, as a very unmeaning mode of passing their time.

She was, however, drawn out of one surprise and thrown into another, by a most polite and flattering address from a male figure, who begged Lady Edwin to introduce him to the lovely stranger; her ladyship's ready compliance with this request convinced Anna it was a person of consequence who made it, which his ridiculous appearance rendered at first rather doubtful, to one who knew not that nothing in that stile was beneath our modern nobles.

He was a tall, elderly personage, whose satin waistcoat and breeches were out-pinked by the rouge on his cheeks, and that beautifully contrasted by the white daubings on the other parts of his haggard face; he had a wide mouth, which the art of his dentist contrived to fill with a double row of false teeth; he was fond of his height, and to keep up the appearance of youth and vigour he wore stays; he was of such an amorous constitution, that the sight of beauty set him

In a flame, and the shew and variety of his mistresses could only be equalled by his stud of horses; his hair was curiously frized out at the sides, in close imitation of the royal Adonis; he wore a blue ribband and was vastly addicted to falling in love.

He approached Anna with a ghastly stare, which he mistook for a languishing ogle, and which would certainly have provoked her risible faculties, had not Lady Edwin announced him the Duke of —. To laugh at a Duke would have been shocking; to respect him impossible; she was, therefore, an angel, a goddess, and every thing divine, without raising her vanity; and his Grace wounded, miserable, and dying, without exciting her pity; she had too much good sense to feel any thing but contempt, for a man, whose ambition it was to take the lead in folly and dissipation, when not only his age but constitution called for reformation and warm flannels, and was not long able to conceal her disgust; the ducal title filled her with awe, but the poor animal who bore it soon

soon deprived himself of respect; she involuntary turned her back on his eloquence, his dignity, and his admiration.

The marked manner in which his Grace singled out our heroine, called forth the glances of the beaus, who, dear creatures! to a man are all purblind; and the ladies, not to be behind them in defects, were so good as to lisp out their inquiries of "Who is she, and what is she?"

These general observations made her truly ridiculous; she actually was out of countenance; her modest eyes withdrew from the gaze of curiosity; a piece of ill-breeding any modern belle would try to blush at. But poor awkward thing she soon ceased to be an interesting object, except to a few dissipated married men; for it being by some means whispered, that she was the daughter of a Welsh parson, whom Lady Edwin had taken as a companion to Miss Edwin, the ladies were easy and the beaus satisfied.

This, far from mortifying Anna, left her to enjoy her own observation, which brought home

home things to her recollection less desirable than poverty and dependence. The insipid evening passed, and the rooms cleared at one o'clock; Sir William, Lady Edwin, and Anna, then sat down to supper, and retired about two.

One evening Miss Mansel received a lesson for all the company they received, or the visits they paid; and very soon was she so well acquainted with the etiquette on these occasions, as to take all fatigue from Lady Edwin, who sat down to cards in the first party, leaving the ceremonial part to her. When she was entirely settled, and her thoughts at liberty, nothing to wish for but the continuance of Lady Edwin's favour the past scenes would often return to her imagination, was it possible, was she indeed settled under the roof of Lady Edwin, could it be, and should she again see and converse with Charles Herbert? Yes, she remembered his parting words; but, alas! what end could it answer? Better, far better would it be to forget he existed; was he not engaged, and that
to

to her friend, the daughter of her benefactress; was it not unjust and ungrateful to wish to supplant a person, who had so many claims to a contrary conduct? And, indeed, if that were not the case, if he were free, were it likely he would think of her, would his family pride stoop to a girl in her dependent state, one who had not the benefits common to the refuse of society, who knew not a creature of her blood, and who was totally destitute of the means of subsistence but from the charity of strangers? Certainly no; well, then, she would resolve to think no more of him:—but

“ Thought repelled, resenting, rallies,

“ And doubles every woe.”

A letter from Mr. Mansel, in which the good man favoured her with advice and congratulations on her present situation, contributed not a little to the fixing in her mind an idea that, to say the truth, never left it. He warned her against the deceptions of her own heart, hinted at the partiality she was suspected of having for
young

young Herbert; at the same time he represented the impossibility of its being attended with success; said the dependent situation of that young gentleman was such, that his ruin must be the consequence of a suspicion of that kind in the family, as he knew it was their settled intention to unite him to his cousin; he begged, therefore, she would guard her peace (her honour he knew to be secured by her own principles) he presented Wilkinson's best wishes and invited her home whenever she pleased.

Anna shed tears over this letter, and called herself severely to task for her conduct, some part or other of which must have given rise to her friend's conjecture; and, perhaps, to others?—Alarmed at this conclusion, she resolved to be more guarded in future.

Lady Edwin grew more pleased with her companion the longer she knew her; and Sir William was as partial as generous, continually buying some little trinket to present her with, and her time passed, if not happily, at least agreeably.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Arrival of a Stranger.

A Month after Anna's removing to Grosvenor-square, Mr. Hugh Edwin returned from abroad.

This event filled the house with joy; he was the idol of his family, and the heir of their noble fortunes; had been four years making the grand tour; no expence or pains had been spared to render him the most accomplished man of the age, and his fine natural parts gave flattering hopes of the figure his rank and fortune entitled him to cut in the world.

But the high opinion entertained of his abilities by his fond parents, and their blind indulgence to the foibles of his infancy, had

had ruined the one, and converted the other into mature vice.

He was handsome and elegant in his person; and by his acquaintance with the world, had acquired an easy and polite address.

His good understanding was embellished with a pleasing delivery, and when he chose to exert himself, he was master of great elocution, which, added to a perfect knowledge of the laws of his country, promised to his father, who doted on him, the utmost that fame and ambition could bestow.

But the unrestrained liberty of action, and power of purse, which he received from the affection of his parents, involved him in almost every vice in the composition of human nature, and young as he was in years, returned to his country a veteran in iniquity—He had seduced under a solemn promise of marriage, before he went on his travels, a young widow of fortune and family, whose love for him so far exceeded all other considerations, that

though she found herself ruined and deceived, she accompanied him abroad, when notwithstanding his great allowance from his father, he contrived to spend her whole fortune.

She had bred by him, but as it is said, there is no friendship among the wicked, neither can there be a lasting esteem or real happiness in a vicious connection.

The lover was inconstant, the lady jealous, and at the time of their return to England, they, who had flattered themselves with the expectation of being blessed for life, were become mutual plagues to each other: the unhappy woman, indeed, still doted on her seducer; but passion, founded on mere sensual pleasure, is sure to evaporate in disgust.

Edwin, certain of his father's generosity, made him immediately acquainted with his situation: he was not mistaken; Sir William Edwin had the most guileless of human hearts; when the young prodigal protested his sorrow for his past indiscretions and promised, amendment, the fond father believed him, and took
on

on himself the care of providing for the lady, which he generously did, and that in a manner that rendered her acceptance of five hundred a year, rather a favour conferred on, than received from him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Filial Piety in fashionable Life.

EDWIN, now free from his companion, was at large; intrigue was his hobby horse, and mischief his pleasure.

The lovely Anna, in full bloom of beauty and innocence, was an object too desirable to be passed over; his mother's

protection had nothing in it sacred enough to preserve her from his attempts; nor his promise to his father considered from the moment he had obtained his end; he knew Miss Turbville was the destined partner of his hand, but that, he never designed, should shackle his inclinations; the more he saw of Anna, the more he was enamoured with her; and so rapidly was her influence increasing, that it was with difficulty he could conceal his raptures, even in the presence of his father and mother—Whenever he caught her alone, which he watched eagerly for, he pleaded his passion with all the violence natural to his temper.

How easy is it to resist temptation our inclinations revolt at! Anna could paint to Edwin his undutiful behaviour to the best of parents; she could assure him, if there were no other objection, her obligations to Lady Cecilia would sufficiently steal her heart against addresses she knew they would disapprove—Abandoned as this young man was, Anna's propriety of conduct and modest dignity of deportment, were

such that, he had hinted at nothing short of an honourable passion, although he was sensible it was neither in his power or inclination to perform an honourable engagement, if he could prevail on her to accept it.

But of that there was not the least danger; for though no more of his character had reached the ears of Anna than what Lady Edwin thought proper to disclose, she was armed with the argument I have hinted at; and had there been no other, I am persuaded there needed none; but in truth there was, and had young Edwin offered her a diadem, her heart was so devoted to the humbler graces of his cousin, she would have rejected him—

She lived but for Herbert, at the same time that she had not the most distant hope of ever being happy in the object of her choice; on the contrary, while her imagination was perpetually bringing back the last scene at Llandore, she flattered herself she could see him united to Miss Edwin, without any other emotion
most disinterested friend—

ship would warrant, reserving only to herself the pleasing idea, that while she was single, (which she pre-determined should be as long as she lived) she might continue the secret preference which her heart now gave him, without injury either to his honour or her own; and having made up her mind in this dangerous manner, she no longer fought to repress the approbation, which in spite of herself, would accompany the memory of every action.

Her heart was continually forming comparisons between him and the young men that visited at Sir William's; if her sentiments happened to be those of any other person, she was sure Charles Herbert's expressions would have given grace to them; if she was disgusted, her first thoughts were, good heavens, how different is Herbert!

Thus, nourishing the secret bias of her soul, she lived at Lady Edwin's without any disquiet, but what the young man's assiduities gave her, some weeks: for Miss Edwin was to stay in Bedfordshire till the family went to fetch her, that

that a convenient opportunity for Mr. Edwin's falling in love with Miss Turbville might not be wanting.

Mr. Edwin found himself in no hurry to forward this marriage; his heart became really devoted to Anna, the more seriously, that notwithstanding the disadvantages of her situation, two gentlemen of fortune, one of them of rank, had made their offers of marriage; one a Baronet, of good estate and reputable family, turned of forty; the other, a Mr. Mordant, a young man of unexceptionable morals, and agreeable person, son to an opulent West-India planter, who Sir William, being acquainted (with his connections) was very kind to; and he was admitted into the family on the footing of a relation; his father left him to his own choice of a wife, that must accompany him to Jamaica, and his heart paid homage to the charms of our heroine.

The indifference with which she received those proposals, and the explicit

manner in which she refused them, appeared no less extraordinary to Sir William and his lady, than flattering to the vanity of their son: he had been so used to success among the women, he could not doubt but his good fortune would still continue; and the latent partiality for his dear self, convinced him those rejections of Anna were founded on her attachment to him.

He dreaded nipping in the bud the bright hope on which so much depended; the least hint of his nuptials, as consented to by himself, would, he foresaw, ruin him with her. On Sir William settling his affairs with Mrs. Mitford, he promised to comply with all his wishes in regard to his establishment in life: and indeed a situation, independent of control, was too desirable a matter to be declined by a young man who wished for nothing more.

Yet the lovely Anna to be given up, was too great a sacrifice even for independence, and one excuse followed another to protract time,

time. Mr. Herbert's family were invited to accompany them to Bedfordshire, but Edwin had privately written to Charles to put off the journey from week to week, till Sir William declaring he would go without them, (their absence would no longer answer his purpose) the day before their arrival, he thought proper to fall sick, a private emetic gave the appearance of a violent attack that alarmed his parents, who wished to call in every medical assistance; but their son had a particular confidence in one only, and he, though not a person who attended the family, was employed, and his reports of the progress of the disorder just such as suited the patient's inclination.

It was in vain Lady Cecilia intreated he would have more advice; it teased him to be opposed, and increased his fever; he was sure he was perfectly safe in the hands of Mr. Depuis, and would see nobody else.

Anna, susceptible to all the feelings of humanity, and who loved and honoured

Lady Edwin, caught from her the habit of solicitude for her son; and anxious to calm the fears of the fond mother, was constantly inquiring after the health of her heir.

Of this circumstance Mr. Edwin's valet took care to inform his master, whose joy, at each proof of her attention was hardly to be kept within bounds; to her inquiries he was always better; to others worse: so that Lady Cecilia, finding herself comforted by Anna's report, was so exceedingly pleased when she made it, that she could not but be encouraged to persevere in a conduct so acceptable to her patroness.

In this situation the Herberts found them. Young Edwin and Charles had spent their youth, and taken the first rudiments of learning together, having never been separated till Mr. Edwin went on his tour; so that, unlike as the cousins were in their principles, they were much attached to each other.

Herbert

Herbert was hardly seated by the bed of his friend (for he pretended he could not sit up) before he disclosed his sham sickness, alledging his repugnance to the state of marriage at all times, but more particularly now, when he said he was expected to fall in love with one woman while he was heart and soul devoted to another, as the reason of putting this deception on his family; he then proceeded to inform him of the method he had taken, having actually made himself ill by counterfeiting sickness.

This occasioned a good deal of mirth between the two friends, in the midst of which, his trusty valet came to inform him Miss Mansel had asked after his honour's health twice in the last half hour.

"Charming, delightful, kind Anna!" exclaimed Edwin.

The mirth which had exhilarated the countenance of Herbert in an instant fled.

"What," said he, scarce daring to breath, "who? Miss Mansel did you say? Anna, is it her?"

"Ah,

"Ah, you know her then?" replied the other—"Yes: who but she *could* have taken such entire possession of my soul?"

"I thought," said Herbert, "she was married?"

"Heaven forbid," answered Edwin, "that any human being should dare to have a hope of the kind; no, she refused William Mordant and Sir Charles Stanley; refused them for me, Charles; I have stolen into her little heart; she must be mine."

"What, then, will you give up Miss Turbville?"

"Not so, neither."

"How will you, then, manage with Anna? you cannot think—"

"*Think, I know* she loves me, Charles, and by heavens I adore her; but I believe we shall neither of us *think* it necessary to have recourse to the dull beaten road of matrimony."

"Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,

"Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

Mr. Edwin, in the excess of his rapturous ideas, ran on for some time in this strain, and might have, uninterrupted, repeated all the poetry and common-place sayings the worn-out subject of seduction could furnish him with.

Herbert was too much absorbed in his own ideas (which were not of the pleantest kind) to attend to him; he was not, till this moment, sensible of the strength of his attachment to our heroine; 'tis true he thought her engaged, and by this time married to the person of her choice; that, and that only, had prevented his attempting to render successful the first serious passion he ever felt; but now that he found she was not only single, but in love with a man that meditated her ruin, his thoughts were in tumults?

Should he not endeavour to save sweetness and purity so captivating?

Were those elegant manners, those charms of person given her, then, in such profusion, to be the prey of vice? But how could she be saved? would a woman

woman who could attach herself to a known libertine, thank him for an interference (rather impertinent than according to such ideas) friendly, and if so, what end would it answer, except involving their family in a quarrel, which would distress his mother, and even bring the charge of ingratitude on himself? As he was conscious of many obligations to his uncle, he, therefore, for a moment, gave it up, and retired, under pretence of fatigue, pleading it as an excuse for not waiting Sir William's return from the house; but he could not leave Grosvenor-square without making his bow to Lady Cecilia; he accordingly was announced.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The Pique.

THE crimsoned cheek of Anna would have told a very contradictory tale to that he had just now heard, had Herbert observed her; but a sensation resembling inward pride and resentment, added to the resolution he had just formed, and being prepared to see her, prevented that observation, or any other. After paying his respects to Lady Cecilia, he bowed with the cold indifference of a common-acquaintance and no more.

Good heaven! what at that cruel moment were the feelings of Anna; her heart had fondly anticipated the pleasure of this meeting to Charles and herself; she could not, from all his behaviour, help indulging hopes of being dear to him; their
parting

parting scene was ever present in her mind, the plaintive sound of his voice at that period still vibrated on her ear; and after all, was it thus they met! the pointed neglect, the cutting indifference, struck her with grief and consternation.

Too much confused to ask after his mother and sister, and scarce able to support herself, she took the opportunity of Lady Edwin's family inquiries to retire to her chamber, where a flood of tears relieved her swelling heart:—Ah, cried she! bitterly weeping, it was not to Mr. Mansel only, I discovered the imprudent, the presumptuous thoughts, my own folly too, too much encouraged; Herbert has perceived it, and despises me; he sees the forward girl is not to be trusted with the appearance of friendship; his looks, his manner, spoke a contempt I could not otherwise have excited.

But perhaps, continued the afflicted girl, the change in my situation has had this effect; and could Herbert, could he be the first whose behaviour should remind
her

her of her dependence on his family; was that the expansion of his heart, the noble disposition for which she had so admired him: cruel Herbert, unhappy Anna; she had created an idol in her own imagination, of manly beauty and goodness, her every thought had learnt to worship; he had barbarously torn away its amiable visage, and substituted in its place the most frightful deformity; but she would think of him no more, or if she did, it should be with the contempt such caprice deserved; she would shew him, that true pride of conscious worth, and integrity, was of no family, that it might exist, undignified by blood, unadorned by the gifts of fortune: suppose he had suspected her imprudent affection, surely it could be no difficult matter to change that affection into scorn for one who could insult a woman; for such a change of behaviour, without the least cause on her side, amounted, in her present imagination, to an insult.

The value of Lady Cecilia's kindness to her now lessened; she condemned herself
for

for not taking Dalton's advice, and fixing on a trade, whereby she might subsist, with some little claim to independence: she had lost all consequence with herself from the moment she supposed she was of none to Herbert; her heart sickened at the prospect before her; she had written to Miss Edwin, in her former stile, but had received no answer, the sweet intercourse, and the union of minds, that were to last their lives, were already evaporated, and had no more place in that lady's thoughts than if they never had existed.

From the sentimental novelist of seventeen Miss Edwin was transformed into the gay coquette of twenty; the hero of her first romance only maintained his ground in the variety of her ideas; Charles Herbert was amiable, when over-run with notions of love; she was ignorant of almost every thing else; and now that her fortune was a bait to every coxcomb she became acquainted with, and her passion for admiration gave encouragement to every fool to address her, still her cousin

was

was beyond compare preferable to any she saw, and her pride was not a little hurt to find his attachment to her by no means what she had flattered herself.

Miss Turbville, her now bosom friend, was the counter part of Cecilia; they were educated together, and the formation of their minds left to women who (interested only by the price they received, and ignorant of the real accomplishments that render a young woman of fashion valuable, to her own connections in particular, and society in general) were gratified in making them acquainted with the superficial knowledge, they themselves possessed.

Born to splendid fortunes, and never contradicted in their lives, it is little to be wondered their tempers were unamiable as their manners; they both set out determined to be the heroines of sentimental passions; but fine cloaths, fine company, and fine jewels, with the very fine speeches of a few as fine beaux, totally overthrew the first soft system, and introduced an inordinate love of dress, pleasure and admiration;

miration; sensibility was banished, and the finer feelings were no more.

So that there was no consolation to be derived from the memory of Miss Edwin's freindship.

Mrs. Herbert wanted resolution, and Patty, the amiable Patty, power to be of service to her; Dalton had plainly hinted she must not think of living in his family, Lady Edwin's protection was therefore her only resource, and there she must constantly see the man of all others she wished to avoid; the advance of spring promised no alteration, as there was yet no talk of going to Dennis Place.

Lady Edwin at this moment sent for her to inform her of two things; one highly agreeable to her, was, that Mr. Herbert, his lady, and daughter, were arrived at their lodgings in Bond-street, whither she desired her to go and welcome them; and the other that Cecilia, and Mr. Stanley's family, would be in town the following week.

Anna

Anna eagerly flew to execute the commands of her patroness; PATTY wept with joy, and Mrs. Herbert expressed as much pleasure as the gloom on her countenance would permit; they had not yet seen Charles, who came from Oxford to join them; they returned with her to Grosvenor-square, and staid the evening.

Mr. Stanley, guardian to Miss Turville, a most worthy character, was rejoiced at the approach of the time that was to free him from the care of a flighty girl, whose large fortune rendered her so tempting an object; and therefore, since the mountain would not go to Mahomet, Mahomet he said, must go to the mountain; in a word, he removed with his family to a ready-furnished house in Burlington-Street.

It signified nothing now to be sick; all evasions were at an end; Edwin's honour had been given to his father, to marry, when he so nobly provided for Mrs. Mitford: no excuse would be admitted by his parents, and his ideas were so full of the charms

charms of independence, that when he could get the lovely Anna out of his head, he was rather desirous of being what he called settled.

But that was neither often nor of long duration, Anna returned with double force and with irresistible power, banishing every agreeable consequence of his marriage with another; he knelt, swore, and vowed in vain; she urged his obedience to his parents; to remember his family, fortune, and connections: and finally, declared her affections were engaged—Distracted at this idea, he resolved to force a compliance from her; he now found it in vain to court; disappointed pride and vanity stimulated a passion that wanted no goad.

During the time of his separation from Herbert, dissipation and vicious company had not done more towards corrupting his mind, than good sense and moral companions had effected to improve Herbert—the former felt that he respected his cousin more, but loved him less for his superiority: notwithstanding his rational and
polite

polite behaviour on all occasions, he had found him rather shy of the confidence he was disposed to place in him respecting his designs on Anna; and when he perceived he had imposed on himself, in his conclusions of her partiality, he was prevented both by that and his own pride from revealing to him his disappointment, or future intentions.

Herbert on his part, now in the constant company of our heroine, found reason and reflection too weak to guard him from her fascinating charms; yet, piqued at his first behaviour, her whole deportment towards him was so reserved, so cool, and so distant, that he doubted not Edwin was a favoured lover; he regretted a thousand times he had not tried to make an interest in her heart at Llandore—he recollected a variety of circumstances which might have convinced him she disliked Wilkinson, but it was now too late to avail himself of those observations; for, besides that it would be dishonourable to his cousin, his own delicacy could

not bear to think of being second to such a libertine, even in the heart of Anna; yet he wished, fervently wished, she might escape the meditated ruin.

Those conflicts in his mind so affected him, that it injured his health, and change of air was prescribed: Mrs. Herbert would gladly have accompanied her favourite, but Lady Edwin wished her to stay in town, and advised lodgings in its vicinity, or near London, from whence he might ride occasionally, or they visit him; but he chose to return to Oxford, as soon (after he had paid his respects to Miss Edwin and the intended bride) as possible.

CHAPTER XXXV.

First Impressions.

MR. Stanley's family arrived in town the beginning of May; Mr. Edwin found his intended bride just the reverse of what his heart approved in Anna: she was, indeed, tolerably handsome, but vain, conceited, proud, and witty; had much small talk, loud laugh, and large white teeth, her cheeks, as she was very fair, shewed the rouge at the first glance, and her auburn brows were robbed of their beauty by a black pencil; her hair plaistered with pomatum and brown powder, formed a strong contrast to the clean chestnut locks of Anna; in short, if instead of captivating, she had laid a regular plan to disgust, she would certainly have succeeded.

But Mr. Edwin was too much a man of the world to suffer his sentiments to escape him inadvertently ; it was his business to fall in love ; and as very few men exceeded him in natural or acquired understanding, to which was added a graceful, handsome person, he was so fortunate as to render himself as pleasing to the lady as he affected to be charmed with her.

Cecilia was in the mean time playing off all her airs and graces, at her inanimate cousin, and vexed to death her pains were attended with so little success ; her anger increased by observation not less galling to her pride than alarming to her jealousy.

Charles (pre-determined to be a close observer of Anna at the first interview of the intended bride and bridegroom) had no eyes or ears for any one else ; he saw with extreme satisfaction the placid serenity of her countenance kept its unruffled, peaceful appearance ; looks of curiosity were all the only ones she directed towards them ; her face was the faithful index

dex of her mind, in her fine clear skin every interesting change in her thoughts might be read, and the loveliest pair of eyes in the universe had not yet learnt any lessons but those of nature.

Cecilia saw and felt her superiority; felt it, accompanied with scorn and envy—What whim could possibly induce Lady Edwin to keep such a thing about her!

She had been accustomed to watch the eyes of the men; it was not long before the stolen glances of her brother made another discovery, which she was resolved should be turned to use.

When they returned to Grosvenor-square, Miss Edwin went with them; having sent her woman and baggage before; she pleaded a head-ach as an excuse for directly retiring, leaving Lady Edwin surprised, and Anna piqued, at the coolness of her behaviour, however, as neither thought it necessary to speak their sentiments to each other, no observation was made.

Next morning Mr. Herbert and Mr. Mordant attended Lady Edwin's breakfast-table, which was at two early an hour for Cecilia; Charles came to take leave of the family, and Mordant once more to press his suit with Anna; his intimacy in the Edwin family gave him but too many opportunities of witnessing the unexceptionable mind, as well as lovely person of our heroine.

He brought from the gentleman who had the charge of him from his father a *carte blanche*; the time of his stay in England was very near elapsed, and he for the last time, now came to try his fate with the woman he loved. His interest was warmly espoused by Sir William and Lady Edwin; and finding Herbert was so nearly related to the family, he also intreated his influence. Anna had before said all that a determined mind could say, and the presence of Herbert was very unlikely to give a turn to her sentiments.

The reluctance with which Mordant resigned his last hope, engaged him till two o'clock;

o'clock, when, dressed with the utmost attention, in an elegant morning dishabille, in swam Cecilia, brushing her eyes over Anna, who respectfully rose at her entrance, bowed to the company, and sat down with a mixture of haughtiness and contempt in her looks. Mordant directly applied to her for her interest with her lovely friend—she was surprised, could not divine who he meant—who could he mean but the charming Miss Mansel—she had no influence.

Anna begged he would spare her as well as the company; she assured him of her grateful remembrance of the honour he did her, which she acknowledged she thought her misfortune she could, not consistent with her own notions of integrity, accept; her resolutions were unalterable. “Believe, me, Sir,” continued she, with an amiable frankness in her manner, and a modest earnestness in her countenance, “if I could have returned the affections of so worthy a man, it would have been my pride to do it generously; you are so deserving, Mr. Mordant, I am sure

“ you will meet a heart more valuable
“ than mine, that will require no inter-
“ fering friends to do justice to your me-
“ rit. God preserve you, Sir,” said she,
making him a graceful courtesy, and
immediately left the room. Mordant
then with a tender regret which affected
both Sir William and Lady Edwin, took
his leave. Miss Edwin shrugged her
shoulders;—if a capital merchant would
not do, she wondered what would !

Mr. Herbert now rose to be gone ; it
was in vain Miss Edwin entreated his stay
a few days—she wanted a beau—could not
possibly do without him—nay, he should
stay. He declined all her invitations,
took his leave, and went from thence to
Mr. Edwin’s apartment.

“ Well, Charles, and what say you to
“ my divinity ? How do you like her ?”
cried Edwin the moment he entered.

“ I think her a fine woman, and hope
“ you will be happy.”

“ ’Till death do us part, Charles,—do
“ not forget that.”

“ But

“ But what,” said Herbert, “ do you
“ think of her yourself? for that’s the
“ grand question.”

“ Indeed, is it! But as it is a question
“ which, if answered sincerely, will pro-
“ duce a devilish rude one, it had better
“ not be asked. But come, Charles, as
“ you say she is a fine woman, and all
“ that, if you will take her off my hands,
“ you will oblige me very much.”

Charles expressing no great *gout* to the offered kindness, Edwin inveighed with great bitterness against the folly and insipidity of both Miss Turbville and his sister; swearing, that if it were not for one sweet hope, he would set off and leave them to commit matrimony with any one but himself.

“ Ah! what a difference,” said he, “ be-
“ tween them and the angelic Mansel.
“ Did you observe her absolute loveliness,
“ how, robed in her excellence, she look-
“ ed an emblem of sweetness, innocence,
“ and beauty? Upon my soul as I sat
“ (stunned with the tittering nonsense of
F 5 “ my

“ my intended wife) at the other end of
“ the room, when her coral lips opened to
“ deliver, with grace and ease, the senti-
“ ments of wisdom and propriety, the
“ perfume of her breath seemed, to my
“ adoring imagination, from that distance
“ to reach my soul. But come, Herbert,
“ you set off to-morrow; we will dine
“ at a tavern to-day; where we will toast
“ the angel in half pints, until nothing
“ of love, but the pleasure shall have
“ power to disturb us.”

“ Well,” answered Herbert with a faint smile, “ you talk it bravely; but
“ you forget Miss Turbville, is to dine
“ here.” “ I leave her looking glasses
“ enow, and I’ll swear you debauched
“ me,” replied Edwin, “ *so allons*” taking hold of his arm.

We left Miss Edwin with her father and mother; the former, as I have said, was dotingly fond of both his children: Lady Edwin’s love for her daughter was greatly lessened by her behaviour, which was neglectful and often rude. She directly began
to

to wonder how her mother could think of taking such a girl as Anna about her; she was sure great inconvenience would arise from such a ridiculous piece of charity. Lady Edwin was astonished at the little ceremony her daughter used in speaking to her, and peremptorily bidding her attend to her own concerns, immediately left the room.

Cecilia, whose feelings, such as they were, had been too much for her to bear, before Herbert's departure, now cried out of mere spite. Her father tenderly inquiring into the cause of her affliction, was told she detested Anna; who was a proud, insolent creature, and who had the assurance, she was certain, to aim at ensnaring her brother.

Partial and indulgent as was Sir William to his children, he could not give way to so uncharitable an insinuation, but took the absent unoffending Anna's part with so much warmth, that his daughter flung from him into her own room, where, throwing herself on a sofa, she began to

vent her anger on her woman, who, she declared, had purposely disfigured her head that morning, because she knew it was her desire to look tolerable.

The woman, in broken English, attempted to vindicate herself, and not without some passion, which irritated her mistress to that degree, that she actually scolded; and her voice sounding all over the house, Anna ran towards her apartment, as did Mr. Edwin and Charles.

They found Cecilia, her eyes swollen with crying, her face distorted with anger, and her lips white and quivering in a perfect frenzy, and her woman, a foreigner, talking fast in her turn. Edwin burst into laughter at this scene, which he told his sister, wanted but a Hogarth to render it immortal; he sneeringly asked if she entertained herself often in this way! and immediately turned on his heel. But Herbert and Anna, actuated both by the same spirit of kindness, attempted to sooth the fair vixen; their endeavours were not successful; she rudely bid them leave her apartment.

ment. The truth is, Anna was so much alarmed at what she heard and saw, and Herbert so struck at this unexpected rencontre with her, and so interested at the disquietude in which he saw her, that, unmindful of Cecilia, his first efforts were to calm her fears; and the sight of him in an attitude of the tenderest solicitude, imploring her not to be alarmed, one arm round her waist, the other spread on his heart, while he hung over her enamoured, was not calculated to calm the raging tempest in Miss Edwin's dressing room.

When at her repeated command they left her, she was on the point of discharging her woman; but her peace was made, and she restored to favour by a discovery as new as unexpected.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A Retrospect.

CECILIA's anger had been on the part of her woman quite unprovoked; it was not difficult for her to see she was the victim of her lady's resentment to some other person; her not thinking she looked well was a sure sign she wished so to do; indeed this woman, whose cunning was seldom to be exceeded, well knew Mr. Herbert had a powerful advocate in the breast of Cecilia, and an indifferent spectator might as easily discern that saw him with Anna off his guard, where all his wishes lay.

This, therefore, was Miss Edwin's rival; she was more, she was the indentical Anna, who some years back had rival'd Madame Frajan, (for it was that very lady) in the affections of Colonel Gorget, the all accomplished;

plished; and who, as *she* had injured, it was impossible *she* could forgive; besides the gallant Colonel, though now a Baron, a man of title, was no changeling. She had at different times paid her respects to him, and as often received the compliment of one pound one, but never without regretting the loss of his little flame. Two objects, therefore, immediately offered themselves to her view,—interest and revenge;—what French *fille de chambre* could resist either?

Lord Sutton, but perhaps my reader may here accuse me of inconsistency, having once introduced that gentleman as a character universally despised, we should at our re-acquaintance find him graced with the favour of a virtuous Prince. But unheard of as it may seem for so despicable a character to be made a Lord, I entreat my readers to give me credit for the truth of his being so. In truth the Colonel was very rich; some trifling occurrences in his past life, under the signature of Gorget, were not so pleasing to recollect
in

in their consequences; the name was famous, it was rather too well known:—he, therefore, some how or other by dint of his interest with Lady Waldron, got Baron Sutton added to his consequence, whereby in public matters Gorget was forgotten.

It was this very personage whose addresses were rejected by Lady Edwin for her daughter, on account of his father's obscure original, and who found in her fortune and connections still such attractions, that he had gotten Madame Frajan into the family to forward once more his applications, which, if rejected, he intended to try his influence with the lady for a trip to Scotland; yet though she was young enough to be his daughter, it did not follow that her person was, as he pretended, his ultimate object; Madame Frajan knew the contrary, and if she had not been so certain of that, the improved person and graces of Anna would have decided her opinion. She had some other reasons, which will appear in the course of this history, to hate the sight of our heroine;

heroine; she, therefore, suffered Cecilia to vent her rage, till again tears supplied the want of revenge.

It was then the sly frajan intreated her pardon for having unwillingly offended her, protested her unbounded regard and respect, for so sweet, so amiable a lady, which she flattered herself she should yet be able to prove, and begged her forgiveness for a question that might appear impertinent, but which she should give sufficient reason for asking; and with great humility begged to know how long she had known the young woman Mr. Herbert seemed so fond of? The question was an irritation to the rage of her soul—"Name her not," said she stamping, "one house shall not hold us:"—this was the cue her woman wanted.

Nor need it, Madam, answered she: is this then the Miss Mansel Lady Edwin is so wrapt up in? an impostor, a thief!—Miss Edwin was all attention, her rage subsided, and the woman restored to her favour, by repeating to her the history of our heroine;

so

so mixed with facts, it was difficult to separate the true from the false: what the resolutions formed on this occasion were, will be seen in their consequences.

It happened that Lady Edwin was that evening to have a grand rout, and Anna, who was now perfectly acquainted with a polite assembly, usually did the honours of it, receiving the company in Lady Edwin's place; who was much better pleased to sit at cards, when Mrs. and Miss Herbert were of those parties. Patty, whose love to her friend, equalled her deserts, generally kept pretty close to her.—Herbert dining with Edwin, and Mr. Stanley being engaged to be with Sir William on family business, gave Cecilia a pretence for requesting to be indulged with the company of Miss Turbville, and dinner in her own apartment.

Mrs. Herbert calling in the morning, begged Anna might go home with her, which Lady Cecilia the more readily agreed to, as they were to enter on matters relative to the settlement, and
it

it was not necessary an uninterested person should be present.

As soon as they got to Bond-street, Mrs. Herbert, whose aching heart always sat on her brow, left Anna and her daughter to themselves: the intended wedding in the family, and the finery and shew it would be attended with, for some time engrossed their conversation; Charles and Cecilia naturally succeeded: Patty observed the great alteration in her cousin, and added, that she feared Charles would prove an ungrateful swain, for she was sure that kind of woman was not the one for him; indeed, continued she, I have reason to think he is strongly attached, but where, or to whom, I cannot tell; and if that should be the case, Mama will break her heart, as both families depend on its being a match; Lady Cecilia is so good, she waves all thoughts of fortune, in consideration of the family interest; and though my cousin has taken such a foolish turn, you know she always loved Charles, and he her:—I thought, said Anna,

Anna, he had been her declared admirer ever since I have known them.

Why, as to that, answered Patty, I believe my cousin was rather too sanguine in her ideas of his love; however, I hope in God it will be brought about, for Papa goes on at such a rate, we had need have nobody else to vex us.—What reason have you to doubt it, my dear? why should you suspect he has an attachment?

While Anna asked this of her friend, the situation of her mind may be guessed: I'll shew you, said Patty, drawing a laylac breast-bow from her work-stand; I found this on his bed this morning; when he was gone out, Mama and I went into his room to look over some of his things, I caught it up: he returned very soon in a violent bustle; did not ask me for it you may be sure, but his man told Betty he wore it tied to a string round his neck, and had done so a long while; and,—looking in her friend's face at this period, she saw her pale and agitated; the alarm this gave, put the bow out of her head.

Anna

Anna was indeed ill; all that Miss Herbert said had affected her.—Poor Mrs. Herbert, destitute of any other consolation, robbed of all comfort but what centered in her son, and his establishment, how could her selfish heart give way to wishes that would counteract the only hope of so good a woman; even Patty hoped in God it would be brought about. How could she (was there no other objection) bring herself to give pain to the gentle, the endearing Patty?—but when the bow was produced in evidence of her suspicion, she could no longer repress or conceal her emotions; it was with difficulty she concealed her feelings; and, unable to continue so interesting a conversation, begged to go home: with great reluctance she was suffered to leave them; and Patty engaged, if her indisposition continued, to spend the evening in her apartment; if she was better they were to meet in Lady Edwin's drawing room.

Without acquainting any body of her return, Anna flew to her room the moment

ment she got to Grosvenor-square, and having locked the door, as if her thoughts could be seen, whispered to her fond, throbbing heart ;—if Charles Herbert loved the owner of that bow, then was Anna Mansel the happy object of his attachment !

It was hers dropped, as I have related, the week before she left Llandore. Pleasure filled her bosom, and joy throbbed in her heart ; she was now sure Charles loved her ; in that idea all thoughts of sorrow were banished : and, I must own, to the discredit of our heroine, not one of those very fine arguments she had made use of to Edwin, and which might with equal if not greater propriety, have been urged to Herbert, presented themselves to her recollection, save the effect on his mother's peace.

Her bow tied round Charles's neck, was proof against all the efforts of reason or prudence ; and she indulged, for the first time, a certainty of being dear to him : but whence that coolness on his coming to London ?—No matter ;—if really

really cold to her, the ribband would not that very morning have been of such importance.

Thus, happily restored to self-confidence, she bestowed more than ordinary pains in adorning her person; for though Herbert had taken leave, as the two young men were to dine together, perhaps, in the course of the evening, they might drop into the assembly.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The unguarded Moment.

Lady Edwin knew not of Anna's return, till, supremely lovely she attended in her dressing-room, previous to going down to receive the company.

"You are so charming to-night, Anna," said Lady Edwin, "I despair of prevailing on my daughter or Miss Turbville to treat you with common good manners: but let not that disturb you, the wedding will soon take place, and Miss Edwin will go for a time with her new sister; I give you my word, the envy of little minds will never hurt you with me."!

Anna gratefully thanked Lady Edwin for so kind an assurance, and regretted her loss of the young Lady's esteem; said she
could

could not charge herself with an act that ought to have that effect.

"Look, child, in the glass," answered her patroness, "you will see a very good reason, one that will find its way into the bosom of every young lady on my list to-night."

On those happy terms, who could foresee that this was the last night she should spend under the roof of so partial a friend?

They entered the drawing-room in the greatest harmony: Miss Edwin's return to town brought many young people of both sexes of the first fashion to the assembly; the great Welch fortune was an inducement to the one, and the elegant style they lived in entitled them to the acquaintance of the other.

The beautiful mistress of the ceremonies attracted every eye; a plain white lustring with black flowers, fancied in the most simple and elegant taste, set off her fine complexion, and her *tout ensemble*, was, indeed, striking; innumerable were the compliments paid at the shrine of beauty by the few on whom it had power,

while the two fair friends in the circle they sat, were exhibiting their witty talents at the expense of an innocent woman, whose heart was warm in every good wish towards them.

As she flattered herself, so it happened; Edwin and Charles came in about ten; the indisposition of Anna, (which they heard in Bond-street) occasioned their going into Lady Edwin's drawing-room.

Edwin rallied her on her pallid looks, and begged, for God's sake, she would be ill again. Anna told him, smiling, there were eyes in the room that would not forgive him if his were diverted from their proper object, directing him, by a glance, from her fine eyes to Miss Turbville's party; but, reader, guess, if it is possible, her astonishment, when she saw, playing with Miss Edwin's fan, most superbly dressed, her old friend Gorget, now Lord Sutton.

Had a gorgon faced her, the effect could not have been stronger: her colour changed;

changed, and her tremour was so visible, that Herbert, who was near, observed it, and begged she would suffer him to attend her into the other room for air. Scarce knowing what she did, she complied, and he had the happiness of supporting in his arms, some moments after she got out, the woman he adored.

In this fond moment, unguarded by caution or prudence, he besought her to lean on him; her hands were, alternately, pressed to his bosom, and he addressed her by the tenderest appellations:—this behaviour alarmed and displeased her; and having drank a glass of water, they both attempted to recollect their scattered thoughts. Herbert, however, had gone too far to recede; he therefore intreated her pardon for a discovery her situation had wrung from him, and eloquently pleaded the force of a passion he neither expected nor wished to conquer, though he knew it was hopeless.

Anna, who could interpret this to nothing but her dependent situation, an-

swered haughtily, he was perfectly right, and immediately left him. More wretched and more confirmed in her love for Edwin than ever, he returned to the company pale and dejected; and only staid to make a passing bow to Lady Edwin and the young ladies.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Disgrace.

ON account of her indisposition, Anna sent an excuse to her patroness, who returned a friendly injunction on her to be careful of herself: she passed a very restless night, an unaccountable dread seized her spirits, though innocent of a thought of offending any human being; she feared she knew not what.—Just as she was leaving

ing her chamber, a packet was given her, directed to Mrs. Herbert, by Lady Edwin's woman, with orders to deliver it immediately.

This command was as extraordinary as it was new; nevertheless as it was her part to obey, she walked to Bond street. Mrs. Herbert was not up, and Patty was gone, on a sudden whim, to Richmond, with Charles, who made it in his way to call on a widow sister of his father to dinner; she sent up the packet with desire to know if there were any answer? After waiting an hour, Mrs. Herbert came down; but instead of the cordial, warm, reception, she had been used to from that lady, a courtesy hardly perceptible was all—she sat down.

Poor Anna could not speak at first; but when she could articulate, begged, for God's sake, to know the meaning of such a dreadful solemnity; Mrs. Herbert pulled out the packet, and, opening it, looked at her very earnestly, and demanded

how long she had assumed the name of Mansel?

Nothing had struck Anna, at the first appearance of Mrs. Herbert, but that she had discovered her attachment to Charles; her countenance, therefore, brightened up at this question, conscious of having nothing to blush at in the change of her name, she immediately told her.

“ Did you wait on Mrs. Melmoth?”

“ As to waiting on her,” Anna said, “ she should have been proud to render her any service in her power; but never had attended her as a servant.”

“ You left her in disgrace, child, I think?” “ I am to this, moment, ignorant what my offence was.”

“ There,” said Mrs. Herbert, with a solemn steady voice; “ is half a year’s pension from Lady Edwin. Mrs. Mansel did ill in introducing you to our family; I am sorry I ever knew you; I am, at this instant, concerned more than I wish for you; have you any friends in London?”

Lady

Lady Cecilia herself had not more laudable pride than Anna. Perfectly innocent of any one action that could prejudice those ladies so much against her, and hurt equally by the matter as the manner of her discharge, she retreated from the offered money, and to the question of, "Had she any friends?" answered, "It is not, madam, for an orphan, who has no connection, natural or acquired, to boast of her friends; few in a more elevated station abound with them; it is enough that you, madam, must be certain I have enemies—you perhaps know, though I do not, to what length these have carried their unprovoked malice. If I have deserved to be discarded in this manner, I have no claim to the money you offer. When I am told of what I am accused, I will try to acquit myself; till then, I have only to pray for yours and the family's happiness."

This said, with an air of injured pride and innocence, she was going, but recollecting herself, "asked if she was to re-

“ turn no more to Grosvenor-square, how
“ she was to get her things ?

“ They will be sent where you direct,”
answered Mrs. Herbert.

On which she set down with her pencil, as the only place she could recollect, the inn where the Brecknock stage put up, on the arrival in town. And leaving the house, called a hackney coach, threw herself into it, and bid the man drive to Whitechapel, where the stage from Dalton’s village stopped ; being just in time, she immediately proceeded to Layton.

The whole transaction had been so sudden, and so unexpected, that she could scarce credit her senses, or believe she was now on the road to Layton. One comfort, indeed, offered itself—she had not left Charles Herbert behind. On recollecting and putting together circumstances, she concluded, she must owe to Colonel Gorget’s ill will this new misfortune ; but what could provoke him to this inveterate persecution of her she could not imagine, except it was the
dis-

disappointment of his wicked attempts on her when quite a child; yet the time was so short, since she had parted with Lady Edwin, on such very cordial terms, she could not conceive the method he must have taken to work so quick a ruin; she thought and thought again, and the coach stopped at Dalton's door before she had pleased herself in her conjecture.

When Dalton saw her and looked in her dejected countenance, he exclaimed, "What, the bad money returned."

This salute in her present situation and state of mind was too much; her tears moved Mrs. Dalton, who received her very kindly, and begged she would not make herself uneasy; that she would be always welcome there. "Ay, ay," said Dalton, "for a while, so she shall, but it is time she knew how to get her bread." This was her own opinion; but how it was to be done, was the point. Spite of herself, some latent hopes would arise that she might, one day, be united to Charles, and in that case, would the proud Cam-

G 5

brians

brians of his family ever acknowledge a mantuamaker or a milliner? What, then, could she do? She could think of nothing else, and Dalton still harping on a trade, Mrs. Dalton said, that as Peggy was now out of her time, and in business for herself, Anna might try a little with her first. To this she made no objection, when she should arrange her little matters; during which period, she told the greedy Dalton, she would pay for her board; this Mrs. Dalton positively refused.

Anna sent for her things, which were left, as she directed; when they were delivered at the door, her heart sunk; she had hoped either letter or message would have accompanied them, that would give some light into what had been her offence, or, perhaps, an invitation to return: two or three days elapsed, but no news came from Grosvenor-square, or (what was worse) from Bond-street.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Correspondence.

THE fourth day Anna received the following billets :

“ When last I saw and pleaded the cause of love, awed by your frowns, and silenced by your peremptory commands, I feared I must for ever drop the rapturous hope of possessing the loveliest of women ; but you will now, perhaps, hear that from reason, which passion durst not plead. Any settlement in my power to command is yours ; family, friends, even country, shall be sacrificed to the wishes of my charming Anna, whose name, in future, shall be that of her adorer, if she chuse to assume it. Write to me, I beseech you ; I need not put any other signature

than that of the man who most loves you: you will recollect whom.

BILLET THE SECOND.

“ Madam,

“ It is with difficulty I traced you so as to receive your address: the transient view I had of you at Lady Edwin’s assembly, gave me hopes I should have an opportunity of offering you any service in my power, as the friendship I felt for you at Melmoth Lodge is still fresh in my memory.

I was much surprized, on inquiring of that lady, this morning, to hear you was discharged the family. I do not mean an impertinent inquiry into the cause, but I desire Miss Dalton will honour me with any commands that may be acceptable to her, in the power of, madam,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

SUTTON.”

BILLET THE THIRD.

“ Ah! my dear Anna, what can your Patty say to comfort you under such cruel mortification! You need not tell me you are innocent; how little do those know you, who can think otherwise: I long to see you, but am forbid by all the family; poor mama bears the blame from every body—how he came by it I do not know, but my cousin has a direction which he says will find you, if it does, pray write to your

P. H.

“ P. S. You must direct to me under cover to Mr. Edwin; he is your staunch friend and advocate.”

Indignation at the two first of these notes gave way to pleasure at the last; tears of gratitude filled her eyes—“Sweet friend, dear girl,” flowed from her lips; she resolved to answer it immediately, for two reasons; one was, she wished to oblige Miss

Miss Herbert; the other, she longed to know what she could be accused of—yet how could she approve of the means of corresponding which Patty proposed; as little as she knew or suspected of the ways of intrigue, it was plain, directing to Miss Herbert, under Mr. Edwin's cover, would give him a pretence to visit her, an honour by no means desirable in his and her present situation; for did he not profess to love her, a profession injurious to the peace of the lady he was about to marry, as well as insulting to her own honour; yet how else to write to her friend, so as to prevent her laying under the displeasure of the family? And if she did not write, would not her silence give Patty an impression of her ingratitude, it was impossible she could deserve; could she otherwise find out of what crime she had been accused, or by whom, or could she by any other means ever know any thing of Charles? The last thought decided the point, and the following short note was dispatched:

“ To

“ TO MISS HERBERT.

‘ May you never, my dearest friend, by being in distress, experience the kind of joy your note gave me ; yet I do not approve of this means of thanking you—Of what am I accused ? only tell me that—I cannot wish to engage my friend in a correspondence which must be blameable but that one favour, till better times, is all I ask of my Patty, who will forgive the declining any farther use of Mr. Edwin’s friendship, to her ever grateful and affectionate

A N N A.”

Having written this, Anna set herself in earnest about thinking of future subsistence ; although Dalton’s harsh expressions hurt her, yet she could not in justice disapprove them ; she saw his large family, all of whom were now getting their own livelihood by the laudable exertions of industry—Peggy, the eldest, lived with them, and contributed to their general support ; she had a great deal of work about the village,

lage, and it being now summer, when most young folks, in the middle line of life, have what new cloaths they can afford, was very full of business—the assistance of our heroine was therefore no less timely than acceptable, and her natural taste being good, she very soon took all the trimming and ornamental part on herself; added to this, her late residence in the great world, enabled her to instruct Miss Dalton in the fashions most in vogue, whose fame in consequence became so great, that the ladies, that is to say, the tradesmen's wives, who, either by the success of industry, or a spirit of prodigality, had country houses, began to employ and recommend her to each other, so that business came in very fast, and Dalton, consequently, grew more civil.

But the latent disease of the mind depends not on either success or disappointment in the common occurrences of life; and pride had too great a share in Anna's composition to render her easy in such a situation.

Lord

Lord Sutton's letter had excited no other emotions than those of hatred and contempt; she was sure his ill offices had a second time robbed her of her protectress; and so rooted was her bad opinion of that nobleman, that she dreaded no evil but what she imagined would originate with him: his letter was therefore tossed into the fire with the most perfect scorn and indifference—and here it may be necessary to remind my reader, in Miss Edwin's chamber scene, which discovered Anna to Frajan, the former was too much taken up to observe the latter; her attention was divided between Cecilia and Herbert; or, if she did observe her, she had not the slightest recollection of her person during the few minutes she was in the room, a circumstance that will not appear strange, if we recollect Frajan not owning herself married, the appellation merely as a French waiting woman in all genteel families is Mademoiselle only, and Anna being always in Lady Edwin's apartments, it was next to impossible, during the short time she continued in Grosvenor-square,

venor-square, after Miss Edwin's return from Bedfordshire, that she could have any personal knowledge of her attendant; she could form no conjecture of the author of her disgrace in the Edwin family that did not point at his Lordship.

Many returns of the post having past, and no letter arriving from Miss Herbert—at length, wearied out with expectation, and mortified with continual disappointments, she wished to turn her thoughts to things within her own absolute reach: and though conscious she had taught Dalton's daughter more than it was possible *she* could learn from her, yet, tired with the father's continual teasing, her consent was obtained to be bound for two years to the business, and he joyfully applied to an attorney to draw the indentures; however, before this matter could be completed, it was entirely put a stop to.

They were at work one morning in a room appropriated for that purpose, when an uncommon rattling of coach wheels under

der the window, and a loud rap at the door, excited their curiosity; but what was Anna's surprise, to see Lord Sutton alight from a superb carriage; indeed it took from her the power of speech; and while Peggy was making a thousand conjectures concerning the object of this visit, from a person in a coroneted coach, Anna was absorbed in her own ideas, wholly unable to comprehend the meaning of so unwelcome an intrusion.

Lord Sutton was shewn in, and Dalton instantly recollected in the visage of the noble Lord, him who had made four years before, such alarming inquiries after Anna, felt guilty and abashed, and doubting from his splendid appearance the day of reckoning was come—Trembling and pale, it was with infinite difficulty he could muster up courage to ask the stranger's business.

Lord Sutton, proud only of his rank, riches, and splendour, found his vanity highly gratified by the visible confusion of the poor parson, who he supposed was confounded at his grandeur.

After

After enjoying some moments with the appearance of the most stately indifference, the confusion he excited, he changed at once the haughty Peer into the artful insinuating sycophant, made many apologies to Mr. Dalton for his intrusion, which, he said, was occasioned by his desire to serve a young person under their protection, who, though she had been discarded by a relation of his who had taken her when very young, was, he presumed, too well educated to be capable of being useful to an inferior state of life, and too handsome to be safe in such an age as this from the pursuits of the licentious.

Mrs. Dalton, whose heart had nothing wrong about it but what she derived from her husband, without the least guile in her own composition, was in raptures at this kindness; she was ready to worship him, and heaped praises in the warmth of *her* heart, which his told him *he* could never deserve—but whatever happy presage this good woman's credulity gave him, he was not less surprised than vexed, to observe the
husband's

husband's silence (for he had not spoken since the first salutation) proceeded from some other cause than mere respect for his Lordship. He, therefore, addressed him with praises for his humanity to Anna, so profuse, that Dalton, conscious how little merit he could plead on that account, felt himself more hurt than gratified; and callous as was his conscience, turned the many compliments paid him to an ironical meaning. Undetermined, therefore, in his ideas, he interrupted his guest, by asking him bluntly, if he had not seen him before?

Lord Sutton, although exceedingly disconcerted, was too great an adept in hypocrisy to suffer it to be seen. With an affable smile he commended the retentive memory of the preacher, which he supposed must be of great advantage both to himself and his flock, and answered he was not mistaken, that he had felt the same compassion then for his ward he yet retained, and that in consequence he had made those inquiries, which were of great trouble to himself, without (he spoke it

it with regret) serving the young lady, as he, Mr. Dalton, positively denied any knowledge of her, a conduct he must own quite inexplicable to him. "And pray, " Sir," said the still doubting parson, " who may you be ?" "My name, Sir, " perhaps (at least if you have read the " history of the success of our armies " abroad) you may have heard—it is " Gorget—I had the honour to command " the army in the East Indies ; my poor services his majesty has thought proper to " reward with a title ; Lord Sutton, at " your service."—The room instantly became too small ; the cringing Dalton, reassured no danger was nigh, immediately adopted the utmost servility both of speech and countenance ; while his wife, in endeavouring to clear away her litters, threw every thing into disorder. A Lord was a being in whose presence it was impossible for them to sit ; nor could all his condescension prevail on either of them to take a chair, till he arose and absolutely refused to resume his seat except they favoured him with their company. He

He then artfully begged to consult them on the means likely to be of service to Anna, declining their first offer of calling her down. Dalton, who never for a moment lost sight of his own interest, explained to his Lordship her present situation, and what he had planned for her with his daughter; adding, that as his Lordship was so very good and charitable, if he would recommend them to work for the great ladies of his acquaintance, it might be the making of both.

Sutton, with all his caution, could hardly keep his temper at this proposal; he had in the case of Frajan taken large strides to place a French waiting woman of infamous principles, in attendance on a young lady of fashion and character; but to take on himself to recommend a couple of honest young women as mantua-makers,—what could the fellow mean? Nevertheless he seemingly acquiesced—one only objection struck him; he said, he doubted whether Anna was not more qualified for the station she had just left; he feared so
sedentary

sedentary a life would not suit her education; and as to their daughter, it should be his study to evince his respect for the parent, by his friendship to the child; he would recommend *her*, whether Anna continued with her or not.

This set the matter in a new light. His Lordship was the best judge; he had only to signify his pleasure to them, and they would obey to the utmost in their power all his injunctions. Mrs. Dalton then repeated the motion of calling Anna; his Lordship bowed his assent. She immediately carried this joyful news to our heroine, not doubting but she would be in ecstasies; but the cold and contemptuous reception of the great friendship that waited her acceptance, together with her absolute refusal to go down, almost petrified the poor woman; *what* not go down to a *Lord*, not accept of *his* offered services? What would this world come to? “Indeed Anna,” continued she, “I never
“till now could credit what Mr. Dalton
“has often seen in you; your pride
“will,

"will, as he says, I am afraid, come down."

Anna, piqued at this speech, sat silently to her work; but on Mrs. Dalton's still urging her to go to his Lordship, she suddenly threw it down, and said she would follow her. This she did from a determination to let Lord Sutton see she was not the dupe of his artifice, and farther to convince him she was not likely to become so. Accordingly Mrs. Dalton announced her intention, and in she went. Transient as was Lord Sutton's view of her at the assembly, it had left her image deeply rooted in his heart; the beautiful girl of fourteen he had never ceased regretting the loss of, and the vice which reigned predominant in his soul, was continually placing her innocence and budding charms before him in a light too acceptable to his libertine principles; but when the same beauty, innocence and simplicity again met his eyes, adorned with every grace and accomplishment—when the sweetness and charms of her countenance struck him, more captivating from their maturity, he

felt, what he had till this moment been unsusceptible of, a sincere passion; which to gratify he was determined at all events, be the expence or trouble what it would.

When the fair victim, he now resolved never to lose sight of, appeared before him, when he again beheld her, a tremour seized his guilty frame; he hesitated and faltered, but endeavouring to conceal by a low and respectful bow the disorder of his countenance; he paid her compliments on her improvements, which from any other person might have flattered the vanity of a young woman: but here repentment, at the unprovoked ill offices and recollection of the base advantage he had taken of her unprotected state at Melmoth Lodge, were too strong to be forced by a plausible appearance or fine speeches; and the humble situation in which she was, so far from mortifying or abashing her, only stimulating her pride; with a haughty air she demanded his business.

This was a reception the proud, yet mean, Lord was not prepared for; and
again

again his admiration of the lovely object before him deprived him of all his guard and fortitude; he however attempted to gloss over both his letter and visit, by alledging compassion and humanity as his motives for both.

Oh! ye divine sources of every comfort to the distressed, how were ye here prostituted to the worst of purposes!

Anna thanked him; but as she could subsist independent of his offered kindness, insisted on declining that and every favour from him. Your youth, Madam, said he, and inexperience of the world you are to live in, is with me an apology for this return to the warm effusions of friendship and good will. I was once, it is true, so unfortunate as to offend the purity of your ideas; but assure yourself, Miss Mansel, I was then, as now, incapable of meaning you injury: you must allow for the prejudices of education; for the free manners in a man the world not only dispenses with, but even approves. I have been, I do not deny that *I am*, a free liver with respect

to your sex; meeting, therefore, alone, a pretty girl, I might, without a farther thought, be tempted to steal a few kisses.

The indignation and shame which filled the heart and countenance of Anna at this varnished excuse, were too apparent not to strike him with conviction of her incredulity; but he had other ends in view than speaking to her; it was at the Daltons; they he had the satisfaction to see, eagerly credited his professions, and as eagerly condemned the conduct of their ward to so great a man.

The liberties he had taken, with the insult he had offered her, he was very conscious would not bear the excuses he had made; but he depended on her modesty and delicacy for her silence. He was right; the injured innocent was now in her turn abashed and confused; it was but for a moment however, her natural pride and integrity, reanimated by the recollection of the distress this man had brought on her, enabled her, with a rejecting motion of her hand, to tell him, if the world were so in-

dulgent

dulgent to such actions as he had been guilty of, and such principles as he possessed, it was the fittest place for him, and the most unfit for her to figure in; she therefore begged he would return to it, adding, she was too sensible of the obligations she was already under to him, particularly *late ones*, to wish to encrease them; and, courtesying, contemptuously, withdrew.

Every word and action increased the anger and astonishment of the Daltons; who, from the moment he announced himself a Lord, set themselves down as made people; he already fancying himself in a fat living, she with delight anticipating the aggrandisement of her family through his recommendation, and having herself no idea of wounded delicacy or insulted honour, nor suspecting the open, candid, humane person before them of plotting the ruin of innocence, could not comprehend from what madness or folly Anna could thus refuse such desirable and advantageous offers of friendship. The rude answers she returned destroyed the castles they were building

and left traces of disappointment on their countenances much more visible than on that of their visitor; he knew how to take advantage of this disposition in them, and with an air at once of sorrow and chagrin, lamented the obstinacy of Anna, that put it out of his power to gratify his own wishes in serving her. However, Madam, said he, turning to Mrs. Dalton, though it is hard to meet unthankfulness where we know we deserve gratitude, suffer me to recommend this poor ill-judging young woman to your farther protection; and since she refuses my good will, permit me to request you will accept this trifle towards the expense she must be to you, and promise not to make her acquainted with it. Having said this he shook hands with the Parson with great apparent cordiality, and stepping into his carriage, was no sooner out of sight, than eager to examine the contents of a purse that felt so very respectably, Dalton and his wife retired to a little inner room,—twenty guineas was a sum suf-

ficient

ficient to give force to weaker arguments than those used by Lord Sutton; it set him in an unanswerable point of view, it established their notions of his generosity, and revived the hopes they had formed from his acquaintance.

After much deliberation it was agreed they should join in persuading Anna to write to such a noble friend, ask pardon for her ingratitude, and implore his returning favour. Accordingly they went, and having extolled his goodness both to them and her, got the assistance of their daughter, and all three beset her with arguments and entreaties, by soothing and threats, by fair means or foul, with equal success; she was too sensible of what was right, and her principles were too justly founded to suffer her judgment to be biased where her honour was concerned; she saw with grief he had found the weak side of Mrs. Dalton, and the wicked one of her husband; and that in consequence she must expect to be farther persecuted.

But as rapes, and carrying off by force, so generally related in modern novels, had

not been part of her readings, and as they are things that do not often happen in real life, she apprehended no other danger from him; indeed his age and debilitated constitution were securities from those evils; she therefore contented herself with hopes to hear no more, than from the Daltons, of a man for whom, and for no other person living, she felt a real hatred, and continued her negative to all their arguments without assigning to them her reasons. Perhaps she may be accused here of a blameable reserve; but true delicacy and true virtue even feels the strongest repugnance to think of, much less repeat actions hostile to their tenets; and it is to those who really possess that character a kind of humiliation to admit they have ever been insulted.

But the grand account of a life devoted to injury and deceit practised on the innocent and unwary, was now to be settled on the heart of Lord Sutton.

The elegant deportment, the charms of our heroine, appeared the more irresistible from

from the difficulty that attended his pursuit; his soul long rendered callous by a continual guard over himself, and the gratification of almost every inclination he had suffered himself to indulge, its faculties weakened, and his person so debilitated and infirm, that he was become an antidote to that sex who had been his former prey, now received impressions that deprived him of rest and peace—the more he reflected, the more ardent was his passion—he cursed his own precipitancy at Melmoth Lodge, and firmly resolved to let no thought or look escape him now to alarm or increase her dislike, of him; all his thoughts were bent on the means of attaining the possession of what seemed necessary to his existence. How to compass this desirable point, did not appear so easy as he wished; but to give up any design once formed, or leave one stratagem of fraud or hypocrisy untried, would have been as new as the passion which now filled the mind of Lord Sutton.

His arts, in conjunction with Frajan, had robbed her of every friend but those

(if they might be called so) she was now with ; the power of wealth, joined to the artifice he was master of, he had no doubt would be all the force he wished with Dalton and his wife : but what method he should pursue to render Anna propitious to his desires, was the thing that most puzzled him.

It was necessary to subdue her pride as well as virtue ; to do this she must become dependent on him—his friendship must be indispensably necessary to her subsistence.

Again the idea of solely devoting to her his charming person revived, and with it a resolution immediately to pick a quarrel with a widow of pleasing person and large family, whom poverty had induced to listen to his addresses, and accepted the place of mistress of his town house in the room of a high bred lady who had left him in company with a discarded groom : his own pride had made him dress this woman out with great elegance ; but as it required art, as well as attraction, to keep alive the appearance of passion in the noble Peer, and

as

as this lady was not an adept in her calling, he felt no kind of concern for her or hers; and the most she could boast of was a kind of splendid misery.

CHAPTER XL.

An odd old Man.

ANNA in the mean time attended to the business, though Dalton ceased to tease her about the articles; it was impossible in a small country village so near the metropolis, when the chief inhabitants were the wives and daughters of tradesmen who could not exist without a country house, of which number there were many at Layton, such a figure as hers should be unnoticed; she soon be-

came the subject of curiosity, of admiration, and of scandal. Who and what can she be? She is very handsome—she dresses too elegant—is too accomplished and genteel for a mantuamaker—she has certainly been somebody's mistress. A coroneted coach with a glaring suite of attendants, stopping above an hour at the door, with a gentleman only in it, afforded subject for censure and confirmation. At the assembly of Mrs. Bibbins, the same evening, a very pretty, delicate young man, designed by nature for a retailer of gauze, but jumbled by chance into a brandy merchant, as he was called, assured the ladies, in the softest lisping tone imaginable, that he was certain she had been in high life, for that he had seen her in a box at the Opera, when he and his sister (a young lady then present) were in the gallery; which was confirmed with the additions of Miss's being sure she was one of those bold women, viz. a kept one—she knew her again the moment she saw her. This matter settled,

settled, not a person in company, save *one*, but had penetration enough to discover the most innocent countenance that ever graced the creation, to be one of the abandoned cast;—this was *a woman*.

Mrs. Wellers was the wife of a merchant who had retired from trade with a decent competency, leaving an only and deserving son in possession of his all, which was employed in procuring him a footing in a bank of great reputation, where he was at first placed as cashier: his sobriety and attention insured him that success, and impowered him to make those returns to his worthy parents, their noble confidence in him deserved: he married a woman of plain person and manners, with an excellent heart, and large fortune: they had several children; and Mrs. Wellers saw the goodness of her own disposition, and the universal good will she bore the whole human race, richly rewarded in the particular prosperity of her own family; entirely at peace with herself, and satisfied with the uprightness of her own
mind

mind and actions, she was the last to believe any reports that could injure or distress an individual, and the first to seize on every occasion of vindicating an absent person.

Mr. Wellers had taken very much lately to frequenting Mr. Dalton's chapel, and though he had no crimes out of the common frailties of human nature to repent of himself, he was a great encourager of religious practises in those who had: the Doctor himself did not take more pains with his hearers than Mr. Wellers; and often his house was subject to guests of his spiritual acquaintance, not very acceptable to his wife; notwithstanding, the sweetness of her disposition made her give way, with great good humour, to those little whims in a man she had thirty-four years entirely loved and honoured; and sometimes she had been prevailed on to go to chapel with him.

It was here our heroine had struck her; not indeed in the light the rest of the company had seen her; she felt herself prepossessed

essed in favour of that beauty and simplicity she thought shone in her countenance: and having in the course of employing Peggy Dalton, been frequently in company with her, she immediately, and with no little warmth, defended the condemned Anna; I wish I could say with success, but the fiat was gone out; to be convinced by arguments supported only by candour and benevolence, against such glaring crimes as youth, beauty, and poverty, would be proof of a weak and yielding mind, few people chuse to be guilty of; and to recant an opinion formed on such strong grounds, a condescension not to be expected.

The good Mrs Wellers was not intimidated by her want of success; her thorough knowledge of life, and perfect practise of politeness, rendered her the leader of every thing else in the village; but she had not power to enforce her own candid and generous sentiments; yet as, when once a character was attacked, she never gave up her point while a possibility remained of defending the absent, she
seldom

seldom failed in the pleasure of finding herself rewarded for her perseverance, by seeing, with the assistance of a little time and patience, every doubt removed, and innocence cleared up.

It is much to be lamented, that notwithstanding this is a circumstance which daily happens, it is often protracted by some unlucky accident, till the calumniators are either removed from the spot, or themselves in the same calamity they so unmercifully inflicted on their fellow creatures, otherwise something like shame might possibly operate for the general advantage of mankind.

When this worthy woman left Mrs. Bibbin's, she began to revolve in her own mind the several circumstances she had refused to credit in the course of her visit.

There was certainly something more in the appearance of Anna than in the common run of young women in her situation: her dress, so much superior to Dalton's daughters, either wholly contradicted his assertion, that he had brought her up on charity, or if that were so, spoke a mystery

mystery in which she found herself interested, and resolved to take the first opportunity of finding out.

Anna, conscious of no cause for shame, saw herself an object of general observation; but as she had always been so, though from different motives, it had no other effect on her than restraining her from walking out, when a recess from work would have allowed her that recreation.

It happened, that the next morning after Mrs. Bibbins's rout, Anna was surprised by another visitor, as unexpected and undesired, though not quite so odious, as Lord Sutton: this was Mr. Edwin; he was shewn, or rather walked, into the room, where she was at that moment in conversation with Mrs. Wellers; her crimson'd cheek immediately directed the eyes of that deserving woman to the gentleman, in whose countenance the greatest satisfaction appeared, and whose glances at our heroine ill accorded with his affirmative, on being asked whether she might congratulate him on his marriage.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wellers made an offer of going; but Anna, who happened to be quite alone, and not chusing to be left with Edwin, intreated her stay, under pretence of expecting Peggy Dalton, tho' she in reality knew she was gone to town, and would not return till evening. Curiosity added weight to her request; and the lady, to the visible displeasure of the gentleman, was reseated.

He told Anna they were just returned from Bedfordshire; that he had suffered, with great anxiety, any constraint that prevented him from waiting on her; assured her he had shared the mortification *she* had received from *his* family, and, that all he could command was at her service.

This very open declaration from a man who acknowledged himself a bridegroom, staggered Mrs. Wellers' good opinion of our heroine, more especially as it was received in silence.

After a pause, Anna inquired of the health of Lady Edwin and her daughter.

The

The latter, he told her, was with Mrs. Edwin, the former gone to Wales.

“Accompanied, I suppose,” answered Anna, “by Mrs. Herbert and her family.” An assenting bow called up another blush.—Mrs. Wellers had now almost given up the cause of poor Anna; when she was most agreeably surprised, after a second pause, to hear her address her visitor in a very solemn manner.

She told him, however honoured she might be, by his condescending to take notice of a person who had been so contemptuously dismissed his family, she must beg leave to remind him, that the more destitute and friendless she was, the more it behoved her to take care of what only she could call her own, which was her good name—“Far, Sir,” continued she, “be it from me to insinuate, that
“the son of my benefactress, a married
“man, a bridegroom, would wilfully do
“any thing that could lead to a deprivation of that most invaluable treasure: but you must forgive me, Sir,
“if I remind you of the utter impropriety

“ priety of a young woman of my rank
“ receiving visits from a person of yours,
“ in the predicament in which I now stand
“ with your family: should any officious
“ tale-bearer but mention the circum-
“ stance of your being here this morn-
“ ing, would it not justly offend ladies,
“ for whom I have a sincere veneration?
“ —Pardon me, Sir, (for he was eagerly
“ interrupting her) the conclusion drawn
“ might no less affect your peace than
“ my character; I therefore must beg to
“ be excused seeing you, if at any future
“ period you should make Layton in
“ your way.”

This plain dealing was by no means acceptable to Mr. Edwin, who gave Mrs. Wellers a look of displeasure, and intreated Anna to favour him with five minutes conference.

The request was refused as eagerly as asked—He insisted on it—She was immoveable.

Great as were his chagrin and disappointment, he did not chuse to discover
half

half what he felt; he, therefore, rising, said he would take some more favourable opportunity of waiting upon her with his message from Miss Herbert.

“ Have you then, Sir, any message from her, and could you be so cruel as to detain it so long?—Alas! I feared she had forgotten me,” answered Anna.

The starting tear as she finished the sentence, thrilled the heart of Edwin, who only made use of Miss Herbert’s name to gain his point of speaking to her, but a farther thought now presented itself to him, as a stratagem by which he might have her fully in his power: he, therefore, in a cool, resentful manner, wished her a good morning; said he saw she was engaged, but hoped to be more fortunate in the next visit he had the honour of paying her.

Anna would now have wished to detain him, but could not prevail on herself to make any farther attempt.

When he got to the door, his servants had retired to a neighbouring alehouse, which the convenience of an adjoining shed

shed entitled to the name of an inn—Edwin, at no time a good master of his servants, now being mortified, and his hopes founded on Anna's situation so entirely repressed, was in no humour to forgive this stolen refreshment; he swore he would break the rascals' bones; and seeing an elderly decent person on the opposite side of the way, looking earnestly at him, asked if he had seen his scoundrels?

The person, unaccustomed to such a laconic address, gruffly answered, he was not used to look after scoundrels.

Irritated at his words, and more at his manner, Edwin fiercely threatened to horsewhip him into better manners.

The man, as much a stranger to a drubbing as the fear of one, instantly crossed the way—Edwin, in the pride of riches and prosperity, (forgetting that a breach of the peace might subject a man of the first consequence to inconvenience) was as good as his word, and handsomely made use of his whip.

The

The neighbourhood, alarmed at such an outrage, to a person who unfortunately was no small favourite of the poor of the place, came to his assistance, and our bridegroom was soon in the safe custody of a blacksmith, constable, and his assistant, a collar-maker.

The person he had insulted, to his infinite surprise, proved one of the wealthiest men in that part of the country; one, who was above a pecuniary compensation, and whose rage at the affront as well as injury would admit of no palliation.

An action at law he knew would be a means of putting the assailant to an expence which he could not suppose would be an object to the young gentleman: he therefore wisely determined to take him before a magistrate, and prosecute him for the assault.

Edwin, whose understanding was exceedingly good, and whose knowledge of the laws and customs of his country had not been, even in his tour, neglected, saw the disagreeable predicament in which
his

his passions had involved him, and endeavoured to assuage the resentment of Mr. Bently, but in vain: before a magistrate he should go, and give security to answer his offence at the next quarter sessions.

Ineligible as this situation was for a man of fashion, there being no remedy, he got some of the bye standers to hunt out his servants, not wishing to return to Dalton in so disgraceful a situation. The men were soon found, and it was lucky for them his wrath had met with such a set down; he bid them follow him, with an execration delivered between his teeth, which was productive of a fresh offence, as his vindictive adversary immediately took witness of it, in order to oblige him to pay the penalty for profane swearing. Never was poor young man of gallantry treated with less respect or ceremony, during their walk to Mr. Justice Trap's; the iron gate being unfolded by a servant in livery, who was in Scrub's true explanation of his service, his twin brother, on one part, indeed, of his business exceeded

the Herculean labour of Farquhar's original, since to the duties of gardener, coachman, footman, and groom, was added that of clerk and prompter to his master, although the fees of office were not part of his earnings, a hardship under which he was obliged to be content for many reasons, the principal of which was, his having been a tradesman in the village at the time his master worked as journeyman with a barber in the same place; and, by misfortunes it was neither in his power to foresee nor prevent, gradually reducing in his circumstances in the same progression as the fortunate Mr. Strap had risen, and at this period having a wife and family on the spot, the generous justice had taken him in the above several capacities out of charity, for which he allowed him eight shillings per week.

By this grey-headed servant or clerk, then, our party was ushered into his worship's presence.

Salutations, not, indeed, of the most friendly kind, passed between his worship

and Mr. Bently who told a plain matter of fact tale, producing witnesses to support his charge. Mr. Strap had, therefore, nothing to do but ask the delinquent whether he had any, and what bail to offer, as if he had not, a mitimus, which Arnold was ordered to produce, must be filled up.

Edwin was much better acquainted with the power of Strap than he was himself; and having sufficiently cooled since he offered the offence, begged to speak with both gentlemen without other witnesses; he found great difficulty attending this request, Mr. Justice Strap being a very placable person, and by no means capable of giving offence where it could be returned, and Mr. Bently still smarting under the weight of his daring breach of the laws of society.

At length, however, the favour was granted, after the precaution on the side of the magistrate, of a whisper to Arnold, when having told his family and connections, he made every acknowledgement possible

possible for a gentleman, and offered any satisfaction for the affront; this *ecclaircissement* had a very different effect on his two auditors. The justice forgot to enforce the necessity of the *mitimus*, in the very great respect he professed for the person who was to have been the object of it; he protested were it him, he should rather look on the little passionate folly of such a man, as a piece of good fortune than otherwise, as it was the means of putting it in his power to confer an obligation, where it was the highest honour to receive one, and he made no doubt but Mr. Bently would be of his opinion.

“ Not quite so fast, good Mr. Justice,” answered that gentleman, “ speak for
“ yourself; you and I see this matter very
“ differently; you, I perceive, are inclined
“ to pardon in Mr. Edwin, actions that
“ would ruin one of his footmen; as to
“ the good fortune of a horsewhipping
“ from a great man,—why I wish you
“ had it with all my heart; but *this* is
“ not the *first* time you and I have been
I 2 “ of

“ of contrary opinions; if this *man* (for
“ I will not call him *gentleman*) were of
“ less consequence, his offence would be
“ less likewise; and were it not in his
“ power to injure society as much by ex-
“ ample as precept, the particular af-
“ front offered *me*, should not excite an
“ unforgiving spirit.

“ But here comes a great man, and,
“ like *your* honour, (bowing to Edwin)
“ he happens to be out of humour about
“ a wench, a hare, a card, the turn of a
“ die, or some such *important* matter:
“ well, he chances to meet some insigni-
“ ficant fellow, whose head being happily
“ free from any such impressions, is quiet-
“ ly following his concerns on the King’s
“ high road, thinking nor meaning injury
“ to any created being; poh, says the
“ great man, *you* shall not tread the same
“ ground, breathe the same air, look erect,
“ or wear your beard like me; but why,
“ and like your honour, (bowing again to
“ Edwin) not because I am better, older,

“ or

“ fro

" or wiser, but because I am *richer* than
" you.

" That may be an incontrovertible rea-
" son with you, Mr. Justice; but I am,
" as I dare say you think, an odd, obsti-
" nate old fellow; and it gives me great
" pleasure just now to stand in the me-
" dium between the overbearance of the
" rich, and the rights of the poor. If
" my groom, please your worship, being
" a lusty young fellow, had laid an old
" man by the heels, I would have pu-
" nished him legally, or sent him into
" confinement as an insane. Mr. Edwin's
" front, to be sure, has nothing wanting
" *in it*; but, nevertheless, I see there no
" stronger plea to excite compassion than
" in Dick Grovers."

" Compassion," answered Edwin scorn-
fully, " your age—"

" Ah, generous youth, would thou
" hadst before remembered it," as scorn-
fully retorted Bently.

" I see," said Edwin, " every conces-
" sion but adds to your insolence." Then

addressing himself to the magistrate, he mentioned the difficulty he was under about bail, as it was in the county of Essex, where he could not recollect an individual he knew.

The civil Mr. Strap undertook to take care of every thing of that kind, ordering Arnold to stand up for one, and the constable for the other. This being adjusted, Mr. Bently retired, and Edwin acknowledged the politeness of the Justice, and inviting him to Portman-square, was, by him, most obsequiously attended to the outer gate.

He left Layton with the most mortifying reflections; sincerely did he condemn the passion, by which he had put himself in the power of such a low-bred fellow, as he called Bently; and bitterly did he curse the pride of her who occasioned it, not that he minded the law, but the story might get wind. What excuse could he make for visiting Anna at all? Some terms it was necessary he should keep with his family, and the little remains of respect
he

he felt for his parents, who he knew would be much hurt at the idea of his being carried like a felon before a petty magistrate, not a little disturbed him.— This train of reflections brought him back to his servants, both of whom he ordered to be discharged the instant he got to town; they *then*, bound by no interest nor awed by any fear, told the whole affair in the servant's hall; and before six, it was a settled thing among Mr. Edwin's domestics, that their master kept Miss Mansel.

Mr. Dalton and his family, I have said, were out, the day Edwin was at the village; they were gone, by invitation, to dine (where my reader will not expect to find them) with no less a person than Lord Sutton; there the splendour of the house, magnificent service of plate, quantity of servants and rich liveries, opened a new world never seen or suspected before by that family; they were first suffered to wait in view of riches that appeared endless, till their ideas of the owner were

accompanied with an awe which increased with each new thing that appeared : and as their waiting was protracted for no other reason than to give them impressions suitable to his purpose, his entrance into the room, with the most placid smiles upon his countenance, cordially shaking hands with Dalton, and saluting his wife and daughter, almost turned their brain.

He immediately entered into a very free conversation with them, adopting their manner of discourse, and gave them a dinner abounding with every delicacy the season afforded ; to which were added, the various superfluities, which, at the command of the rich, are taught to counteract the law of nature, by bringing the bloom of spring to deck a winter table, and spreading it in summer with the hoary appendages of winter. The most costly and delicate viands were handed round in a plenty and profusion, of which the humble visitants knew not the name ; and the water, vainly, though with the most servile respect offered to people, who were
stranger

strangers to the custom of using it at table.—A desert fit for the entertainment of a royal guest followed.

Wonder and admiration kept silent those for whom so much pains had been taken, and the table would have been cleared without its being touched, but for the great attention and sollicitude of the noble Lord, whose polite recommendation of each different fruit and confectionary drew them out of their wonder into a more substantial enjoyment of the things before them.

When the servants withdrew, having impressed his guests with equal ideas of his riches, politeness, and generosity, he artfully, by inquiries into their income, and expressing his surprise it was so small, threw out hints of many different ways by which it might be enlarged.—Suppose Dalton's return to the church, as he had connection, and, indeed he flattered himself, interest with some of the first people, in whose particular line presentations lay; in the mean while, till something could

be done, he must insist on their accepting an annuity from him; he could not bear so amiable a woman as Mrs. Dalton should feel an inconvenience it was in his power to prevent, or so worthy a man as her husband want any friendship he could command. And having made sure his way, he now ventured to mention their ward; he lamented that her pride and obstinacy deprived him of the pleasure of doing her a two-fold service, that of assisting herself, and of relieving them from the burden of supporting her; he asked them whether they could tell on what occasion she had been dismissed Lady Edwin's family.

Mrs. Dalton's answer was consistent with truth; she lamented Anna's obstinacy in refusing his favours, which he was grieved she still persisted in, though she had no friend else in the world, as to be sure, though she pretended to be ignorant of the cause by which she had lost the protection of the Edwin family, it was to be supposed that Mr. Mansel would adopt their sentiments.

Dalton,

Dalton, I have informed my reader, wanted not cunning or penetration; the depravity of his own principles made him clearer sighted than his wife; the latter ever confided in the appearance of candour, and believed all professions made her, with the most credulous simplicity.

Sutton appeared to her more than mortal with such powers, and such inclination to be of service to individuals; so little pride, and so much humanity blended in one character, were so different to any thing she had fancied of a great man, that not a suspicion to his disadvantage could possibly find its way into her mind.

Not so her husband—the attention of Lord Sutton, so constant and unsolicited, his extraordinary generosity, the beauty of Anna, and character of the man, which was too notorious to be a secret to any who chose to enquire, were strong reasons for close observation: and he had no kind of doubt, but his Lordship's views

on Anna were more personal than he wished to be known.

He considered himself in no degree answerable for the event; he wished heartily to get rid of a young woman on whom he could not look without feeling a kind of shame and self reproach, which by long habit had changed to a hatred of the object, that caused so disagreeable a sensation; without taking from his own family their all, it was now impossible to do her justice. Lord Sutton could not, therefore, more fervently wish to get possession of Anna, than Dalton to be freed from her. These thoughts, however, had too evil a source to be communicated to his wife; passive obedience and non-resistance he had long taught her, but her morals were yet good: avarice only found its way into her mind, from his constantly preaching how necessary money was to the subsistence of children she fondly loved.—He had, indeed, been as particularly careful to guard every sentiment of his own which would lessen her confidence

confidence in his religious practise from her as from the rest of the world, which, from her disposition was easy enough to effect : he, therefore, encouraged her great encomiums on Lord Sutton ; nor was he himself backward in his acknowledgments ; concluding with a hint highly pleasing to his Lordship, that if Anna continued her wicked unthankfulness of heart, he should not only discard her himself, but expect to be repaid the expense he had been at on her account.

This Christian resolution exhilarated the countenance of Sutton, and gave the wished for explanation of the principles of the professor of religion :—they parted in mutual good humour, his Lordship presenting Peggy with five guineas for the expences of the day.

CHAPTER XLI.

A new Friend.

WE left Anna in the best hands—Mrs. Wellers, whose curiosity had carried her to Dalton's, found herself less satisfied, but more interested by what had passed during Edwin's visit—A train of reflections, the most melancholy and depressing, took such entire possession of my heroine, at the departure of that young man, that Mrs. Wellers had twice bade her good morning, before she was sensible of any thing but her own gloomy ideas.

After some time, however, her eyes met those of that Lady, bent on her with a mixture of surprise and compassion, that at once confused and affected her:—the silent tear stole down her glowing cheeks:—again recollection of past events crowded on her imagination;—her agitation

tion increased—she turned pale;—a sickness overpowered and rendered her an object truly affecting to the humane Mrs. Wellers, who assisted in soothing and recovering her, with a most delicate attention,—avoiding even to ask the cause. When Anna could collect her wandering ideas, she respectfully apologised for the trouble she had given the lady, and thanked her for her kindness with an air of the strongest dejection.

Mrs. Wellers feeling herself more and more interested, declared that she would by no means leave her to such evil company as appeared to have taken possession of her, but insisted on taking her home to dinner, and she should continue with her till the family returned from town.

Anna would have gladly excused herself from accepting her considerate invitation.—The evil company alluded to, were those she most wished to indulge;—but Mrs. Wellers was too pressing to be refused—and as she knew the Daltons paid great court to that lady, not only on account

count of her business, but of her influence, she concluded it would be improper to risque affronting her by a refusal; and indeed the whole of this Lady's conduct had been so kind, it was against her own feelings to do it;—accordingly Anna accompanied Mrs. Wellers to her habitation above a mile from the village.

Mr. Wellers was not at home, so that the day was spent with no other company; and the beauty and sweetness of our heroine in the course of it were found to be her least perfection:—the education she had received, of which, in her situation at Dalton's, hardly any traces were discernible, now, in the society of a well-bred, sensible woman, was displayed with additional lustre, as it was wholly unexpected.

The ease and politeness of her behaviour and conversation, the modest display of her abilities, and the rectitude of her sentiments, equally pleased and surprised her new friend:—who (though she longed to know by what accident so lovely, and so accomplished a creature became an inmate with

with people so very inferior, in every discernible point, as those with whom she lived) forbore any kind of inquiries.

She had indeed gone to Dalton's with that intention, having no apprehensions of giving offence, where the offer of her services would so fully compensate for any transient mortification. The journeywoman of a mantuamaker could not be thought to carry much sensibility about her:—but when she had spent one day with Anna, her respect increased with her liking, and she intreated, at parting, often to be favoured with her company.

During her walk home, the reflections which had been interrupted in the morning, returned.

Miss Herbert, had totally, she feared, deserted her, till Edwin's hint of a message had awakened hopes too acceptable to be conquered—She regretted incessantly the not giving him the desired conference—Yet the billet, which she was convinced was his, was certainly an indispensable reason for refusing it—but could a moment
have

have been of consequence—, yes, one moment would have exposed her to the reproaches of her own heart—*What* did that fond heart hanker after?

Miss Herbert was forbid corresponding or honouring her with notice;—and had she not declined receiving any favour from that young lady, through the medium of Mr. Edwin?—Could there be now a justifiable reason for altering her mind?—Alas, no! the latent cause of her involuntary regret she wished to conceal from herself.—They would now be going to Wales; what would Mr. Mansel think of her being discharged from a family, on whose native justice and benevolence all who knew them depended? She had not yet written to that good man; how could she bear to wound his heart by a tale of distress he could not relieve?—She had hoped to have heard from Lady Edwin how her misfortunes could have deprived her of so valuable a protection; and there were moments in which she resolved to write to
that

that lady—but a certain pride of conscious rectitude and innocence forbade it. “Why should I sink,” said she, “lower than my fortunes? If I had injured Lady Edwin; if I could accuse myself of one thought or act towards her, unaccompanied with affection and respect, no humiliation could be too great for such an offence;—but as it is, Miss Edwin shall not feed her family pride with my solicitations.” But she would write to Mr. Mansel; he would give her some information respecting those to whom her heart involuntary turned. She had hitherto supported herself in the idea that her present situation was unknown to young Herbert; but now she found the wedding had taken place with all the show and parade Lady Edwin from the first designed—she could not doubt he was there, and acquainted with her disgrace.

Indeed if he was not, his correspondence with his sister was regular and punctual, and it was not probable, an event so remarkable, as that of her being so suddenly

dently discharged from the family, should not have been communicated by her to him, more especially when Miss Herbert was so good as to interest herself in her fate—"Alas!" cried she, weeping, "he
" no longer remembers the wretched
" Anna; or perhaps thinks of her with
" contempt—But what have I done; how
" have I deserved this cruel reprobation?
" Dearest Patty, have you too given up
" your friend; do I live only in the me-
" mory of my persecutors and enemies;
" is there on earth so forlorn an out-cast?
" Oh! if my parents could look down on
" the grief of their unhappy orphan,
" would they not lament the fate that
" preserved my existence, since it is so
" marked by continual distress; since
" every friend on whose compassion my
" orphan state has found a claim, is either
" prejudiced in my disfavour, or torn from
" me by the ruthless hand of death."

The tears which accompanied those reflections, were freely indulged during her walk home; she entered Dalton's house with

with a pale face, swollen eyes, and a heart sunk with despair.

CHAPTER XLII.

Lost Reputation.

TO her infinite surprise, Anna found not one friendly countenance; Mrs. Dalton looked on her with anger, her husband with rage; and Miss Peggy, who was, in her own estimation, a foot taller, for the compliments of the day, with contempt.

Wholly innocent of a thought of giving offence to any of them, she could form no reason for their ill humour, but having spent the day with Mrs. Wellers. She related that lady's visit, and her strong invitations to accompany her home;—but she was soon undeceived, and the grief that before occupied every thought, gave way.

way to amazement and indignation, on being accused by Dalton in the lowest terms, of receiving the visits of a married man, who had left her in the heat of a quarrel, and wreaked his spite on old Mr. Bently, who had charged a constable with him—that the reason of her being discharged Lady Edwin's family was now evident—that her imprudence had rendered her the talk of the place, and involved him and his family, on whom she had no claim but charity, in her disgrace.

Anna, poor and distressed, was proud and innocent—such a charge, from a man who ought to have protected her from insult, was too much for her little share of philosophy to dispense with; her heart, which had been softened by her sensibility, now became stout in her conscious integrity—With a calm determined voice, though her whole frame evinced her inward disorder, she demanded to know who it was that dare accuse her of the horrid things his unfeeling tongue had uttered.

“Inno-

“ Innocent creature,” retorted he, provoked that his anger had not struck dumb a person so dependent on him; “ You, “ then, in the whole village, are only ignorant of what has happened; can you “ deny Mr. Edwin’s having visited you in “ our absence—by accident, to be sure— “ we will believe of that as much as we “ can.

“ I can no more, Sir,” answered Anna, “ understand your language than I can “ develop your meaning. Mr. Edwin did “ certainly, as you say, visit me this morning; but why it should expose me to “ such indelicate treatment, you only can “ tell.”—“What business had he with you, “ Anna?” said Mrs. Dalton. “ Will you “ say, he came with the knowledge of the “ ladies of the family?” “ I have not said “ that,” answered she, “ nor anything concerning his coming; his coming was as “ unexpected as unwelcome to me; Mrs. “ Wellers was here when he came, and was “ so good as to stay the whole time he “ continued. I know nothing of the quar-
“ rel

“rel you hint at; I had spent the day at
“the Hill, but had I not so good a witness
“of my conduct,, it would have been no
“cause of regret, as the last thing I could
“expect was to meet accusation from those
“who are bound in consideration of their
“own credit to have vindicated me from it.”

And here the recollection of what would have been Mr. Mansel's conduct on such an occasion, striking with the vivacity which generally accompanies the actions of people of warm passions, she told Mr. Dalton, that, “since he knew so little of her,
“she would no longer trespass on the *cha-*
“*rity* he upbraided her with, but instantly
“return to Mr. Mansel, were it only to
“clear herself with respect to the motives
“that induced Lady Edwin to part with
“her.”

This declaration by no means suited the Daltons—if Anna left them, what became of all the advantages their sanguine hopes had almost brought to a certainty from Lord Sutton? Peggy, indeed, though a very ordinary girl, had been so highly flattered

tered in his compliments to her, that she gave it as her positive opinion his friendship for them was fixed: indeed, why should it not? What was there in Anna so particularly interesting which they could not plead for themselves with equal right? Mrs. Dalton joined her in saying, she thought Lord Sutton too good a man to think worse of them for the fault of Anna; but added, her being an orphan, and friendless, were ties which they had not. Dalton was silent but took a private resolution to inform his Lordship of what happened the next day; and in the mean time desired his wife to follow Anna upstairs, and endeavour to soften what had passed; inwardly resolving, if it were not Lord Sutton's desire she should be detained, to repeat the affront, that she might indeed set off in anger, and rid him for ever of a perpetual source of disgust.

Mrs. Dalton found her in a situation that disarmed every idea of anger her husband's intelligence excited, for it was him who was told, and communicated to her the events of the day. Unlocking her trunk

in order to pack up her clothes, the first thing that presented itself to her was a letter written by her departed friend; the tender and generous sentiments it expressed, the praise bestowed, and the maternal love it contained, now wrung her heart. "Oh, my dear and only friend!" cried she, in a transport of grief, "Why, why are you for ever lost to me? How little does it now avail me to have cherished your instructions, to have made your perfect life the model of my actions. In the wide world have I not a single friend to do me common justice, Could you have thought your Anna would have lived to be charged with infamy?" In those exclamations on her knees, the open letter in her hand, and her face bathed in tears, she was found by Mrs. Dalton, whose good nature immediately co-operating with her husband's desire, induced her to comfort and sooth her, who ten minutes before, she had joined in reviling as the worst of criminals. Anna was soon appeased, but not happy: to find herself the talk of the place as a woman who received imprudent

prudent visits, cut her to the soul; and having inquired into the particulars of the affair, she found the reflections on herself proceeded from what the servants had in their cups said at the inn, who made no scruple of attributing her discharge from the family to a criminal affair with their master; and that now the wedding was over, they supposed she was to be taken into keeping.

A scandal, so void of the least foundation was the more provoking, as there was some part of it out of her power at present to confute. Uncertain what step to take, and depressed beyond measure in her spirits, she could only lament her unhappy lot, and depend on the justice of Providence to clear her fame; making, however, a strong resolution never to see Mr. Edwin again on any pretence whatever—no, not from Miss Herbert—and to take the first opportunity of leaving Mr. Dalton's. Her zeal for returning to Mr. Mansel now abated; could she think of burdening that good man with her afflictions? Could she wish to

involve him in disgrace and distress? What to her was now the opinion of the Herberts? If, as the servants alledged, she was discarded on account of Edwin, Charles would not be the last to hear a tale so injurious to her honour; his sister had certainly given her up—that indeed ceased to be matter of wonder when it was considered she too must have credited a story so calculated to destroy every bias of an uncorrupted mind.

Conscious that he had actually paid her his warm addresses at the very period he was entering into a matrimonial contract with Miss Turbville, she now reflected bitterly on her own want of discernment; since from that circumstance it was evident, however disguised under the appearance of respect and delicacy, his views had the abandoned end so openly declared in his biller. She regretted not acquainting Lady Edwin, at the time, with all that had past; but her regret now came too late—her good name, that invaluable jewel of a woman, was hurt—innocence alone could not clear

clear her character, and she had nothing else to oppose against the calumny so recently excited by the folly and imprudence of Mr. Edwin; sad as those reflections were, they were continually uppermost in her thoughts.

To return to Mr. Mansel she could not bear—to stay at Dalton's was worse; unknowing and unknown, what hope could she entertain of making more fortunate connections than those which had cost her so dear? Yet she was resolved to try; and for this purpose seriously began to search in her mind for some clue to guide her through the labyrinth before her.

Mrs. Wellers was the only person with whom she held common conversation out of Dalton's family, since she had been at Layton; to her she resolved to apply, and, if necessary, to open her whole mind. In this disposition she walked to the Hill the next morning; but not having the good fortune of meeting her at home, she left word she would call the next day.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Contains Things of great Importance.

DALTON went, as he proposed, to Portland Place; if he wanted confirmation of his suspicions before, the change of countenance in Lord Sutton would have been sufficient,—rage, jealousy, and sorrow, were alternately, visible in a face, never tolerable, now absolutely hideous.

A volley of imprecations startled Dalton, and the furious Lord hardly could restrain himself from manually rewarding his intelligence; the affrighted Parson wished himself out of the house, and lost, in fears for his personal safety, all hopes of future advantages; however a little thought on one side, and patience on the other, explained the sentiments of both.

Lor

Lord Sutton made an apology for his warmth, which was very readily accepted by Dalton; they proceeded, therefore, to business with equal eagerness, and it was agreed, the noble Lord should call, by accident, next morning at the reverend teacher's house, to try, aided by the advice of her friends, to prevail on Anna to move out of the way of seduction, or if it was too late for that, to preserve her from the farther evil consequences of such an atrocious crime.

Lord Sutton's humanity carried him still farther; Mrs. Edwin was a charming woman, and deserving a better fate; he felt for her—to rescue her from the misery of discovering the infidelity of her husband, and, at the same time, to remove from him the temptation of continuing to injure so fine a creature, were, as he assured Dalton, what he had most at heart; his praises were echoed with all that servility opulent vice ever receives from indigent sinners; and those sentiments which owed their origin to the most abandoned mo-

rives, attributed to the divine emanation of Christian benevolence and good will to the person he wished to destroy.

When Dalton had taken his leave, and Lord Sutton retired to his library, freed from the impertinence of observation, distracting as the idea was, it was but too probable that the sweet prize he had so long meditated obtaining, was now forever torn from him; the pangs of jealousy this thought gave, convinced him of what he did not like to believe, that his heart was now really attached, and that, *maugre* all that vanity could urge, it was without the least hope of return. To that excess he adored Anna that he now regretted he had not offered her marriage; but she had been so long at Lady Edwin's house, after her son arrived, before he had seen her, it would, perhaps, have been too late, then, to have obtained her unsullied hand; and however abandoned has been the life of a libertine, let his actions have been branded with every breach of the laws of honour, gratitude, or hospitality, let him have called

led the holy host of heaven to witness, his perjuries, let beauty, innocence, and virtue, have been his prey, be it remembered, such a character, though worn out with every vice to which human nature is liable in its most depraved state, he expects he is yet entitled to the disinterested affections, the pure and unblemished heart of whatever happy woman happens to strike his worn-out taste.

As the fond wish we are apt in our sanguine expectations to form, leaves us, we are then, while hope and fancy play around the imagination, fond of seizing on the next good thing we look forward to.

Thus, Anna, courted by Edwin, one of the handsomest young men of the age, if it were possible she had yet retained her virtue, would not, surely, yield to him; her old prejudices yet alive, perhaps, suspecting, what was truth, that he had helped to deprive her of her friends in Grosvenor-square, as well as Somersetshire.

But to be a lady, to make her mistress of himself and fate, could she, in nature, refuse that? Yet to bestow himself and fortune on an orphan, a girl nobody knew, were all his intrigues to end in so inglorious a union; but then the charming image of Anna decked in jewels, ornamented by dress and equipage, rendering him the envy of all the young fellows of the age, arose in his idea, and banished from thence every mortifying retrospect of what had been, in the enchanting hope of what might yet be; and he determined, if he found her uncontaminated, pure, and worthy so capital a piece of felicity, to offer her his hand.

Madame Frajan was announced in that instant; but a day before this visit from the partner in his iniquity would have been the most acceptable thing that could have happened; at present it was rather *mal-a-propos*. However she was too deep in his secrets to be affronted, she was therefore admitted—Her lengthened face and meaning eyes convinced him there was something to

to be told ; but curiosity had now little room in a heart totally absorbed in the delightful ideas of possessing the most lovely of women.

Frajan was too full of her errand to observe this change ; and having prefaced her story by desiring now to remind him of what she had frequently asserted, that tho' the English woman possessed not that noble frankness which rendered the gallantry of French ladies more conspicuous, they were none of them averse to intrigue :—The demure little Anna, for instance, though she wanted penetration and taste to suffer his Lordship to initiate her into the soft passion, had not been so cruel to Mr. Edwin, by whom she was now actually kept. This intelligence, delivered partly with reproach and partly with spite, found not such credit with Lord Sutton as some other of that lady's invention, with his aid, had done from the family she served.

He knew the last part to be false, as well as many other things laid to the charge of Anna ; but the case was now altered, the

injuries done to the character of a deserted orphan might not, perhaps, become necessary to clear Lady Sutton; as the blemishes, which would ruin the one, and deprive her of the means of procuring an honest subsistence would be lost in the affluence and dignity of the other. But yet there were some few obligations our heroine owed to the invention of him and his associate, Madam Frajan, which it would be by no means convenient Anna should be acquainted with, at least while it was out of her power to acknowledge them as they deserved.—But for this consideration, the league betwixt those two worthy friends would have been instantly dissolved, as it had never yet happened that he had set the least regard on any one person longer than he could in some shape or other make them subservient to his interest, or dropped with the least reluctance any one who had done him the last good office in their power.

His Lordship had now no thought of his fair emissary, but how to cast on her
the

the odium of every injury done Anna by their joint means.

Cooly, therefore, he assured her, she had been misinformed, that he was better acquainted with Anna's situation and sentiments, and believed the first was reputable, the latter untainted.—The air that accompanied this declaration struck poor Frajan dumb; Lord Sutton turned the friend of Anna, then must he be inevitably her enemy, since if admitted to her conversation, discoveries must be made which *she* could not stand the brunt of. However, one consolation remained; she had likewise discoveries in her power, which, on occasion, she was determined to make use of. Female spite required this piece of justice, on a man who had, from the beginning, deceived even her; and his suffering her to depart without the accustomed douceur, which she always reckoned on as her undoubted perquisite, contributed not a little to the vindictive spirit in which she left him.

Lord

Lord Sutton, full of his intended project, and the happiness he expected to result from his deep-laid scheme, paid little regard to the suddenness of her exit; one difficulty now struck him, which was, how to get rid of his two sultanas; the one in the house with him, was a poor, spiritless, meek, creature, whose whole pleasure centered in the children she had by a tender and worthy deceased husband;—his pleasures or pursuits were equally uninterrupted by her: indeed, in his opinion, she was but one degree removed from idiotism; he promised himself to part with her without the least trouble or expence: at present, the honesty of her disposition, and the œconomy which (though reduced from very promising expectations) had always been her practice, made her a very valuable manager in his family. Profusion and meanness are very nearly allied; nothing that could feed his pride or vanity, nothing that could contribute to the gratification of his appetite of any sort, was thought much of by him;—

him;—but though from a scene of imposition, waste and expence, Mrs. Villers had established order and regularity, and consequently his house-keeping bills were one half reduced, her accounts were sure to meet a thousand faults, nor even settled without being reminded of the value of money, of the poverty from which he had relieved her, and the distress she must be again exposed to, if deprived of his protection.

The settled unchangeable countenance with which those harangues were received, contributed not a little to confirm his notions of her stupidity; he could, therefore, turn *her* out when it was convenient; but the woman he kept at Bath, who was the same that on his first return from India, he had in the parade of his wealth and oriental consequence, established a first-rate courtesan, who dared do any thing she took into her head, and who, by threats and cunning, had contrived to be supported in splendour, by a man who entertained not the least inclination for her,

her, and indeed who never had any—
How should he do with *her*?

One certain plague which attends old rakes and coquettes, is the mortification sure to be inflicted at every hint of encroaching age; it was a plague particularly tormenting to Sutton; it was his very sore place; Charlotte Madden knew every weak point about him; and the art of turning this knowledge to her own advantage was what she was by no means deficient in. Our hero stood so much in awe of this charming appendage to his state, that though the house and establishment at Bath were elegant and expensive; and though the waters of that delightful place were allowed to be the most salutary for constitutions broken by long residence in a hot climate; it was the place he was least seen at. For this piece of self denial he had two excuses, business in winter, and indisposition in summer; and provided his charmer had been of the party, he would have fairly compounded with any one, to take the whole at a very cheap rate off his hands.

His heart recoiled the moment Charlotte came across his memory: had he been going to be united to a modern woman of fashion, a large jointure and double pin money would have silenced the scruples of a fashionable belle, who, contented to lead in her own set, would not perhaps have been offended at her husband's mistress's claiming the same advantage as those she associated with.

But the purity of the mind of Anna, and the old-fashioned notions she inherited from Mrs. Mansel, would, he well knew, shrink from such an idea; to get rid of Charlotte, therefore, was indispensably necessary; but how, was another thing too difficult to be directly determined upon. Banishing, therefore, such an unpleasant subject, again he indulged himself in contemplating the charms of his future bride, in figuring to himself the serenity of his life with such a companion, and in furnishing his mind with arguments to combat his misgiving, on account of Edwin.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The Disappointment.

NEXT morning carried him to Layton. Dalton and his family were dressed, in expectation of the honour he did them; but Anna was not of the party; a circumstance that gave him no disquiet, as he was glad of the opportunity to inquire if any thing farther had transpired, relating to the supposed connection with Edwin.

He was overjoyed to hear from Mrs. Dalton, she was convinced, as far as related to Anna, it was totally void of foundation; he only wanted this to induce him to open his intention, which he did, with all the parade and ostentation his heart abounded in, at the same time making a full display of the extreme generosity of his motives, in waving every consideration of birth and fortune, to
make

make himself the legal protector of a destitute young creature, who must else fall a prey to the wicked intrigues of a libertine age.—The surprize of the Daltons is not to be described at this declaration, nor their joy, at the connection they had an opportunity of forming, by so eligible a match for their ward, who would now amply repay all their kindness she was supposed to receive from their hands:—in the fulness of their hearts they complimented the noble lord, and they congratulated each other; his goodness they extolled to the skies; while the aspiration of their own hopes seemed to follow his exultation.

When full two hours had been employed, to the mutual satisfaction of the visitor and visited, his Lordship expressed his wish to be admitted to the sight of his intended bride: she had gone out before breakfast, and was not returned; her acquaintance was so small in the village; it was easy to trace it; the maid was therefore dispatched to Mrs. Wellers', with Mrs. Dalton's request she would immediately come home. The girl re-
turned

turned with answer, that Miss Mansel breakfasted with Mrs. Wellers, who had taken her to town in the carriage, but that they were expected back to dinner:—Sutton was disappointed and angry: who the d—l is this Wellers, said he, and why do you suffer her to go out alone?—Dalton satisfied him as to the propriety of her companion, and both promised, till they had the honour of delivering her into his own hands, she never more should go out of their sight.—This promise hardly pacified him:—he was dressed, both himself and equipage, to attract all eyes; armed at all points, he had flattered himself he was irresistible; it was, therefore, with extreme regret, he gave up the expectation of seeing her that day; yet to wait her return and again send for her, would be opening his addresses, which, notwithstanding his great vanity, he had some serious fear about—in rather an awkward way, he was therefore obliged to postpone this weighty affair; and, charging Dalton with his compliments, &c. he told him he should write to her

as soon as he got to town:—the carriage being then ordered to draw to the door, with half the town round it in full gaze, affecting an air of humility and good humour, after bowing to the doffed hats of the mob, he was drawn off.

During the time his carriage was in waiting, the young distiller I have before mentioned, passed the house; and meeting a neighbour, who had the honour of mixing medicines for the infirm in that and the adjacent villages, the distiller, ready to burst with the importance of his own ideas, observed the extreme elegance of the vis-a-vis, and, with a sneer, supposed Miss would be for cutting as great a figure as the Bird of Paradise. The doctor was a man of good understanding, and a tolerable share of professional knowledge; but having met, in his domestic circle, some embarrassment, which called on the utmost exertions of industry to counteract, he had very little knowledge of the world, with which Mr. Bibbins assured him he was perfectly acquainted; what,

what, therefore, was that gentleman's meaning, when he spoke of the Bird of Paradise, he could not conceive.

The young gentleman, in pity to his ignorance, told him it was in high life a courtesan; that the girl at the Parson's was of the same stamp, as he himself had often seen her in places where he and people of the genteelst sort resorted; places, indeed, that required dress, (viewing with no small self-approbation, the pink knee-strings that adorned the upper part of his pretty legs, and heels of the same colour that terminated that lovely part of his charming person) besides the money it cost to get into them.

“ And how came this lady to descend, then, in the full bloom of youth and beauty to leave those gay connections?” asked the Doctor—“ Oh, God! how ignorant you are,” returned Bibbins, “ of life: why, these sort of folks have all their *ups and downs*—that, now, is the Duke of I——’s carriage; he visits her incog. only, till she has
“ obtained

"obtained a settlement from a rich Welch

"Squire, who is married and wants to get

"rid of her."

A young man of plain, but genteel, appearance, whose attention seemed to be taken with the same gaudy object, asked Mr. Bibbins if he was sure he was not mistaken, as the coronet was not ducal— Another opportunity now offered for the display of his knowledge of great folks in the person of the stranger; he answered with an air of positive assurance, that he had known his Grace perfectly well, and *them* great dealings amongst ministers, and *there* sort of folks; that the prime minister often sent for and consulted both him and his father on affairs of state; and it was impossible he could be mistaken in any of the Lords or Dukes of the court; because why, he often and often had been there; and his own uncle, Sir Gilbert Mushroom, had been knighted. Proofs like these, were damning ones; indeed they were unanswerable, or at least unanswered by the young stranger, whose involuntary sighs,

sighs, turned the attention both of the Doctor and young Bibbins from the equipage at the door to the person whose emotions it visibly excited.

There was something in him that raised a good-natured curiosity in the Doctor. To Bibbins he was a bore; and having in his remark of the coronet shewn a superior knowledge to the beau, was directly concluded by him to be a herald painter and a low fellow—Now, though in the practice of that art, if he had by any kind of means contrived to acquire a fortune, or, without one, could dress so vastly well as he, Mr. Bibbins, did; there was nothing that could or ought to have shocked his nicety—but the plainness of his appearance, a dejected turn of countenance, and fallen cheeks, were objects that at once bringing his own apposite perfections in view, inspired him with sovereign contempt: turning, therefore on his heel, humming Tally-ho, without any ceremony he walked off, leaving the doctor and stranger still in view of Dalton's door, the latter

latter with fixed attention there, and the former as fixedly observing him.

Doctor Collet, I have said, was too much engaged in the concerns of his family and patients, to be very conversant in the great world; and, as is the constant practice in small country places, the embarrassments of his domestic circle had been so perversely handled by the good-natured idlers of the village, that his wife dying of a consumption, he had been set down as her actual murderer by one half, and (a woman, whose natural peevish and refractory disposition had not only banished peace from her own bosom, but her habitation) sanctified, as the very best creature in the world, by the other.

The Doctor's pride on one hand, and the particularity of his disposition on the other, always prevented his explanation, which, like Sterne's Yoric, he could have made in his own favour, and had well nigh lost all his female patients, as well as his character, before he dreamed of either being in danger; when, however, he found

the predicament in which he stood, two methods only offered; one was, by going round the families who had been prejudiced against him, and exposing, not only the follies but the vices of the dead, and endeavour to recover his lost ground; the other, to retrench the expences of his house, and rely on his unimpeached skill for as much business as would barely support him, and leave the neighbourhood to their own opinions; this was the least trouble, and this he adopted, devoting all his leisure to study and chemical whims, and encouraging a disposition to despise mankind; but as this sourness of heart was more the effect of habit and necessity, than principle or choice, the natural good nature and philanthropy of his soul sometimes broke out through the midst of contracted petulance; and as in the present instance, his heart yearned with good-will to his fellow creatures.

But though he was so obdurate to the calls of curiosity in his own affairs, no person living could be more interested in those
of

of other people, or take greater pains to make himself acquainted with the causes as well as effects of every occurrence in and about his own village; nor was he, to do him justice, a bit sparing of the intelligence so industriously procured; dispensing liberally at one house all that occurred at another, sometimes seasoned with a little of the acrimony of his own feelings, and that without the least intention of injuring any individual, but merely to indulge himself in the exhibition of his talents, and for *those* he happily entertained a very great respect; really unconscious, though so great a sufferer in his own character, of the mischief his eternal gossip produced, he was the first to condemn the practice he adopted, and as ready to contradict any report, though circulated by himself, when convinced of its falsity, as to enforce its credit, when sure of its being true.

What could he possibly sigh for? What could the girl be to him? he would give the world to know—but curiosity, power-

ful as was its influence on the mind of Dr. Collet, was ever vanquished by humanity; a sudden paleness which overspread the face of the stranger, the evident distress of his looks, and his interesting appearance, altogether excited his attention and respect; he intreated him to go home with him to his house, which was within sight—the offer was accepted with a polite freedom, and a few moments served to settle a very good understanding between the doctor and his new acquaintance, who acknowledged that it was of the utmost importance to him to know every particular concerning Anna Mansel. A firm promise in return was given by Collet, to make it his business to inform him of all he could learn; gratifying at once, by their league, his two favourite, though contradictory, pursuits, curiosity and good nature; on which errand he immediately sallied out.

CHAPTER XLV.

The Morning Visit.

WITH Dalton Collet had no acquaintance; that good man had a mortal aversion to physical bills, nor would ever suffer one to be incurred in his family: but he had heard of Bently's affair, and Bibbins' account of Anna was a confirmation that the report then spread was but too true; however, he was resolved to be something better informed, if possible, and as he had the honour of attending the family of Mr. Justice Strap, he took occasion to call with a *How d'ye?* on his lady.

There he met, on a similar visit to the Miss Straps, Miss Bibbins, the young lady I have before introduced as a person perfectly acquainted with the bad

character of our heroine—Doctor Collet was nobody; he, therefore, was no interruption to that young lady's volubility, who continued her account of a dress which seemed to have made no small disturbance in her ideas.

“ The flounce, if you will believe me,
“ ma'am, was near half a yard deep, of
“ the finest corded muslin, put on as
“ thick as possible—the train, though
“ looped up, I am sure was of a monstrous length; why, dear me, mamma
“ says it is not a little pays for those
“ things; then, ma'am, her linen is so
“ fine—and it is a shame to see the lace
“ she wears—besides she certainly paints.”
—“ That is very evident,” answered the eldest Miss Strap—“ I am astonished Mrs.
“ Wellers can take up with such trumpery.”—“ Oh, as to that, my dear,” answered Mrs. Strap, “ it is easy accounted for; Mrs. Wellers, you know,
“ takes on her to lead us all—and perhaps she may hope to introduce this
“ minx by way of shewing her power;
som

“ some folks who are very well them-
“ selves, may fancy what they please,
“ but there are folks whose characters
“ are of consequence.”

“ Certainly, ma'am,” said Miss Bib-
bins, “ that is what my mamma says ;
“ and besides, as she says, the thing is
“ past doubt ; for how could such a girl
“ as that wear about in her common
“ dress, things that are so expensive and
“ out of character for her ; besides, her
“ affectation of modesty, shunning the
“ eyes of the men, nothing is easier, than
“ to see that it is all a farce—I have no
“ patience with such creatures.”

“ This,” replied Mrs. Strap, is one
“ of the blessed effects of Mr. Thornhill’s
“ establishing his meeting here ; I assure
“ you, I think it very hard the Miss
“ Straps, and you, Miss Bibbins, and
“ the other young ladies of the place,
“ cannot walk out without being shocked
“ by the sight of a kept woman.”

Collet had sat with some degree of im-
patience, in hope of edging in a word, by
way of gaining the intelligence he sought

after, till the last part of the conversation; when understanding, what he had at first no suspicion of, that Miss Mansel was the subject of it, he became not only attentive, but, by just asking a question now and then, when a pause of the fair declaimers would suffer him, he learned that Miss Mansel was a vile young woman; that she had seduced the affections of the lady's son she served, though she then knew he was under engagement to be married to a young heiress of fashion; that he had turned her off; and that she was now making use of every artifice to procure a settlement from him, by threatening to disclose the affair to his lady; and that she was privately visited by more than one gentleman *now*, though they could not positively think what attractions she had:—but men, Miss Bibbins observed, had very strange tastes.

So much for the account at the worshipful Mr. Straps', who corroborated the whole by reciting, in his own way, the adventure of the horfewhip, making no secret of the gentleman's name, though
he

he had pledged his word it should not be known. Having thus succeeded beyond his expectations, Collet took his leave.

The ladies he parted from assured him of the truth of every tittle he had heard; but there was one circumstance weighed against all they could say about our heroine, and that was, the favours shewn her by Mrs. Wellers; that lady, by the uprightness of her own character, and the benevolence of her sentiments, had actually arrived at the happy perfection of keeping in awe her enemies, as well as being adored by her friends, and universally respected by people whose understanding and principles rendered their respect of value: to couple infamy and Mrs. Wellers together, was a union which could never strike Collet; he knew and revered her; and it was not in the power of Justice Strap, his amiable wife, his charming daughters, or their good friend Miss Bibbins, to convince him Anna Mansel was a bad woman, when the next breath, added she was at the Hill: he hesitated, as he came out of Mr. Strap's

gates, whether he could return to his new friend, or by walking, or rather hobbling, being much afflicted with the gout, to Mrs. Wellers', where he might reasonably hope to hear some extenuation of the facts so roundly asserted at Justice Strap's.

When Collet did any thing without consideration, it often appeared, and perhaps sometimes was, from a sudden splenetic fit which looked too like ill-nature; but if he took a moment's thought, if he hesitated, let the trouble, expence, or fatigue, be ever so great, provided it was not in his own concern, good nature, justice, and humanity were sure to conquer;—and he was creeping up the green to Hill-house, before he had suffered a second thought to obtrude, besides that pleasing one, inspired with a love of truth. This was not one of Anna's lucky days: Mrs. Wellers, as I before said, had taken her to town; and the disappointment reminded Collet of his gout; he had all the way to walk back, and, what was worse, no better for the journey, which in the return was painful and fatiguing. He
found

found the stranger impatiently waiting for him, and briefly related all he had heard; not however suffering the fretful fit, then on him, to hinder his likewise telling his own more favourable thoughts.

My reader will perhaps have anticipated the discovery I am going to make of the inquisitive stranger: it was indeed Charles Herbert, who, after making ten thousand resolutions to forget the owner of the breast bow, could think of nothing else; and who broke, in his excursion to Layton, as many vows he had made never to inquire after her; and who now felt that, worthless, and even abandoned, as he had had every reason to believe Anna, it was not in his nature to cease loving her.

Collet, gouty, poor, and a humourist, was at that very time a lover; not a despairing one, for the object of his affections was far from being out of the reach of his pursuit; not a successful one, for his diffidence in his own merits was unconquerable; nor did he guard the secret of his passion with more care from

the ridicule of his acquaintance, than from the knowledge of *her* who inspired it; but he was a lover, and consequently very easily saw the situation of Herbert.

Glad of any discovery, and very much pleased with his new friend, he readily promised to have a constant eye on Anna, and to communicate to him every thing that occurred concerning her; they parted with mutual professions of friendship. Herbert, though his heart was bursting with love and despair, when he left Layton, felt a gleam of consolation from Collet's promised correspondence.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A second Plan for female Education.

ANNA's interest in the affection of the worthy woman, to whose advice she wisely resolved to submit herself, was hourly increasing: she had been received at the Hill with that open friendship which not only encourages, but demands our confidence; she therefore found no difficulty from the innate modesty of her sentiments, when so kindly encouraged, but told Mrs. Wellers, without the least reserve, her whole history, not concealing a single event which presented itself to her recollection, excepting only the feelings of her heart towards young Herbert.

The many changes in the life of so young a creature; the enemies she had so undeservedly met; her destitute infancy, and
present

present uncomfortable situation, were of many arguments in favour of the partiality Mrs. Wellers felt for her, that she promised not only to consider her affairs, but give her every assistance and advice in her power; and, *a propos*, said she, I am going to town this morning, and will take you to my daughter's, where we will consult what can be done for so amiable a girl.

Anna's gratitude was not given to words the tears which Mrs. Wellers affectionately wiped off, spoke their own language, and they both went to town in Mrs. Wellers' coach.

Young Mrs. Wellers was, I have before said, a plain, good woman; the large fortune she had brought her husband intitled her to every indulgence a prudent woman could desire. She was devoted to her children, and her pride was that of making them (they were all girls) the most accomplished women of the age. She was herself the only daughter of a very covetuous rich old man, to whose penury it was owing that his daughter regretted perpetually

ally her confined education:—Not one of the accomplishments she beheld in other ladies of her rank in the world had been taught her; but from the moment she became a mother, she was resolved her children should profit by her misfortune—and the whole of her time was dedicated to the watching over the education of her daughters.

Unread and unexperienced, it will not be wondered if this disposition, amiable as it was, carried her into the opposite extreme: her avarice of instruction for them was visible in all her furniture and apartments; globes, books, frames, musical instruments, stocks, collars, and swings, were not confined to one or two rooms, her house was a seminary of female learning; and the humble rap at the door all the morning, announced the arrival of the different instructors. The dancing step sometimes preceded the dismissal of the back string, and they knew the *aw* and *bè* of the French long before they had an idea of the English alphabet.

Without

Without either ear or voice Mrs. Wellers determined her daughters should be proficient in music: and with capacities which rendered it difficult for them to receive an idea of the four quarters of the globe, they were expected to excel in geographical knowledge. Work, indeed, was out of her system: embroidery, Quadrille baskets, cutting of paper, and other trifles of a trifling age, indeed, were the only employments it was necessary should engage their attention, but not even of them did she make any point.

Her mother-in-law saw with the eyes of indulgence the excess to which this passion of her daughter carried her; she was most respectfully attended to on every other subject, but her remonstrances were so ill received on this, that she prudently declined repeating them; and rather sought to dress in an amiable light, what to herself appeared a weakness in her daughter.

The accomplishments and abilities of Anna struck in a particular manner, as capable of being of more real advantage to her

her grand children, than the laboured instructions of the different masters who attended them; at least they would be more likely to catch the manners of a gentleman from her (whose native grace and politeness spoke her fit to adorn any rank) than the hired foreign servants about them. There was but one difficulty that she foresaw would be a hard one to surmount; which was, her knowing so little of the French language—it was therefore that she did not explain her intentions in taking her to town.

When they arrived in Charter-house-square, Mrs. Wellers immediately ascended to the third floor, which was entirely devoted to the young ladies: the masters and attendants, mother and daughters, were all engaged. In one room the music master was giving his instructions; in another the globes were displayed; in the third a pretty little girl was practising a *pas seul*; and in a large detached closet, another (overlooked by mamma) was attempting
a land-

a landscape, attended by a French governess and two maids of the same nation.

Grandmamma's arrival immediately made a little holiday—the children hung round her, while their mamma was likewise expressing the pleasure this visit gave her. The two ladies soon retired, leaving Anna much amused and surprised at a sight so new; she sat down to the harpsichord with that avidity and pleasure a lover of music, who has long been deprived of an instrument, only can conceive. Her execution and taste, I have before said, were beyond her instructions. The master, who was not yet gone, paid her many compliments on her performance; and she was so delighted with the opportunity of resuming her favourite amusement, that the ladies, who were an hour absent, when they returned found her lost in her own harmony.

The intermediate time had been spent by the benevolent Mrs. Wellers in introducing to her son and daughter in the
most

most favourable and amiable light the orphan she had promised to befriend.

Mr. Wellers was a plain, honest, moral man, whose feelings were regulated by his ideas of justice; the integrity of his dealings were universally known, but he was not more regular in his books and accounts than in his inclinations: He behaved with friendship and affection to his wife, and gave his whole time and attention to the interest of his family:—increasing his fortune for their advantage, he reckoned all the fondness incumbent in a father.

What warmth there was about him was more particularly towards his parents—whose generosity in parting with their all for his establishment, was by him called confidence in his credit: and that is a sort of obligation men of business never forget. One regular mode of life carried him thro' the year. At one hour you was sure to find him at breakfast, at the Bank, at Change, and at dinner. The evening he gave to his wife, and Sunday to his parents. But it was equally out of the nature of things

things to work him up to an act of benevolence, or prevail on him to be guilty of one of oppression. His sensibility neither hurt his own peace, or affected that of other people. His mother's example, as far as it taught him rigid probity, had its effect, but the softness and humanity, the warmth of friendship, and the entire love of virtue which softened her whole soul, she had not the happiness to see actuate the sentiments of her son.

With an attention his respect for her had enforced, he heard her commendation of Anna; and when his wife, charmed at his mother's account of her abilities, though sensibly mortified at her deficiency in the language so necessary for her daughters, asked his approbation of her being taken as governess into the house, in his usual stile he gave way to their opinions; slightly observing, the world was so deceitful, he supposed Mrs. Wellers would inform herself of the truth of the story she had been repeating. She had, she said, no kind of doubt of the least tittle; but however, as
character

character to be sure should be the first recommendation in the situation to which she proposed placing her young friend, she was sure Anna would object to no inquiries proper to be made at Lady Edwin's.

Things being in this happy train for our heroine, Mrs. Wellers returned with her to Layton without having said any thing of her plan till they were returning in the carriage from town, when she explained the nature of the service she meant to do her : at the same time adding, if the children were happy enough to engage her affection, as well as care, the obligation would be all on their side, since she was sure her example and society would be to them of the most serious advantage.

Anna was overwhelmed with gratitude—but diffident of her abilities to undertake what to her appeared a task of such consequence, restrained the lively and animated expressions of it which filled her gentle bosom, she frankly confessed doubts of herself; those doubts were the surest proofs of her capability; and the good-natured Mrs. Wellers only found the stronger reasons

reasons to congratulate herself on such an acquisition. With respect to the inquiries necessary to be made in Grosvenor-square, it was a matter of joy, conscious of the purity of her conduct; and having told her friend every circumstance respecting young Edwin, and the conclusions made upon it by the Daltons, she had nothing to fear; on the contrary, it would explain a matter that had hitherto been so deep a mystery, and perhaps once more enable her to see her dear Miss Herbert. She might yet know how fate would dispose of her brother—she therefore not only consented with alacrity, but urged Mrs. Wellers to go the next day. Her desires were too agreeable to that lady's own wish not to be complied with. When they alighted at the Hill they were told of Mrs. Dalton's message; and Anna, fearing she might be indisposed, begged leave to go home directly; which, however, she was not permitted to do till evening.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



